Bengaluru Saturday, January 17, 2026 Pages 24 Vol 79 No 17 ₹8

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WHACKY VERSE

Stun gun

So Vijay had lots of fun
Acting in Jana Nayagan.
In politics he's new
And he has no clue—
His role is far from done.

DH on Saturday

DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

May tariff countries that don't back my Greenland plan: Trump

P12

The life of a corpse handler

In a town in Kochi, Vinu P has devoted his life to giving unidentified corpses a dignified farewell. He does it by choice. Despite the stigma his family faces, self-belief has kept him going for 25 years. Most cases he handles involve drowning. Once, he had to pay the hospital bill of a man he saved. Another time, his name appeared in a suicide note. Wonder why?

The SATURDAY STORY

Full story, Page 15

RCB mulls AI cameras at Chinnaswamy

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Royal Challengers Bengaluru have proposed the installation of 300-350 AI-enabled cameras at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium and offered to bear the estimated cost of Rs 4.50 crore for better crowd management. The development comes against the backdrop of RCB reportedly shifting their home matches to Mumbai and Raipur. **Page 17**

SC junks judge's plea against Speaker panel

Yashwant Varma

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea of Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma challenging the validity of the Lok Sabha Speaker's decision to form a panel to probe charges of "misbehaviour" against him, in connection with the alleged recovery of cash at his official residence.
Details on Page 10

JD(S) to ally with BJP for B'luru polls

BENGALURU DHNS: Days after Deve Gowda said the JD(S) will contest local body polls independently, party state president H D Kumaraswamy on Friday said they have decided to continue the alliance with the BJP for Bengaluru civic polls. The decision came at a meeting chaired by Deve Gowda and Kumaraswamy, held a few hours after the BJP-Shiv Sena's victory in Maharashtra municipal polls.
Details on Page 3A

BJP-Sena on top in Mumbai civic polls

Alliance also bags 24 out of 29 Maharashtra municipal corporations

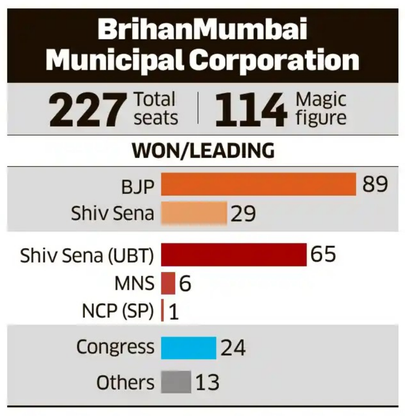
MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis celebrates the party's victory in Mumbai on Friday. PTI

BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation

227 Total seats | 114 Magic figure

WON/LEADING



The BJP and its Maha Yuti allies on Friday captured Mumbai's civic body, ending decades of dominance of the Thackeray family in India's richest urban corporation, and scored wins in 24 of the 29 municipal corporations of Maharashtra.

The BJP, along with Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, is set to have its mayor in Mumbai, as together they crossed the half-way mark in the 227-ward BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

The BJP is expected to have its mayors in most of the important cities like Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, Nagpur and Amravati, while the Shiv Sena will have its mayor in Thane.

Despite the much-talked-about reunion of Uddhav, the Shiv Sena (UBT) head, and Raj, the MNS president, their combined poll might could not stop the BJP's juggernaut from storming India's financial capital.

CM Devendra Fadnavis was the architect of BJP's stupendous performance and the victory will bolster his credentials further. The only silver lining for the Thackerays was Eknath Shinde's subpar performance, with the deputy CM's party ending up in a poor third place in the BMC. The Thackerays have survived to fight another day, but it needs to be seen how Uddhav and Raj take the alliance further.

Fadnavis, the three-time CM, was also able to cut his deputy CM Ajit Pawar to size. In the Pawar family stronghold of Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad, Ajit Pawar's NCP and Sharad Pawar's NCP(SP) joined forces to keep the BJP at bay, but it didn't work.
▸ **Mumbai polls, Page 3A**

Behind closed doors, Cabinet clears sports complex at Jakkur Aerodrome

Chief secy asks officials to convey matter to HC

DH EXCLUSIVE

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

Jakkur Aerodrome

In a move shrouded in secrecy, the state government has proposed to construct an international sports complex at the 205-acre Jakkur Aerodrome in north Bengaluru. The proposal — still at the conceptual stage — is expected to sound the death knell for the Jakkur Flying Training School (JFTS), a heritage aviation institution inaugurated in 1949.

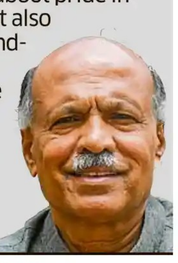
At a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on November 6, 2025, the state Cabinet had decided to build what it described as a sports complex and training institute at Jakkur Aerodrome.

Notably, the government has neither disclosed the agenda nor published the resolution passed at the meeting, as it typically does on several other subjects.

The secrecy assumes significance because the land on which the flying training school is located was granted by the Maharaja of Mysore strictly for aviation purposes. Further, the Karnataka High Court, in an order in December 2017, had also directed that only flying-related activities be permitted at the aerodrome.

Following the Cabinet decision, the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports — which is the custodian of the aerodrome — has been entrusted with preparing the plans for the sports complex and submitting a petition to the high court outlining the government's proposal.
▸ **Jakkur, Page 3A**

> The government is committing infanticide by killing its own child, the flying training school. It is incumbent upon us to pass on heritage sites and institutions built by the Maharaja of Mysore and other visionaries. It would be a tragedy if government bulldozes its way through one of Bengaluru's jewels. Kannadatva is not just about pride in language; it also means standing up for our culture
>
> **Capt GR GOPINATH**
> Aviation pioneer



India world's brightest growth spot: WEF survey

NEW DELHI, PTI

Despite a modest improvement in recent months, a majority of chief economists expect global economic conditions to weaken this year but see India anchoring South Asia as the brightest growth spot despite mounting trade headwinds, a new survey showed on Friday.

In its latest Chief Economists Outlook report, released ahead of the Davos annual meeting next week, the World Economic Forum (WEF) said the global economic outlook has improved modestly but remains uncertain, with asset valuations, mounting debt, geo-economic realignment, and rapid deployment of artificial intelligence creating both opportunities and risks.

Nearly 53% of chief economists surveyed expect global economic conditions to weaken in the year ahead, down from 72% in September 2025, it said.

The report, drawing from consultations and surveys with chief economists from the public and private sectors worldwide, said South Asia has returned to the top of the regional growth outlook.
▸ **Global economic, Page 3A**

PM lauds startup ecosystem

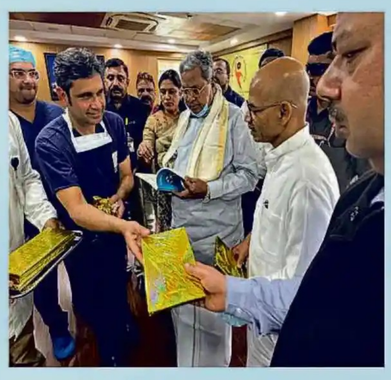
India has emerged as the world's third largest startup ecosystem, with the total tally surpassing 2 lakh, including 125 unicorns, PM Narendra Modi said on Friday.
Details on Page 13

Government of Karnataka
Medical Education Department

A Historic event of Sigining of MoU between Department of Medical Education, and Azim Premji Foundation for construction and maintenance of 1000 bedded Super Specialty and Human Multi-organ Transplant Hospital.

17-01-2026, Saturday 11.00 A.M

Banquet Hall, Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru.



Inauguration :

Sri. Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Government of Karnataka,

Hon'ble Invitees:

Smt. Nirmala Seetharaman,
Hon'ble Central Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs
Government of India.

Sri. D.K Shivakumar,
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister,
Government of Karnataka

Kum. Shobha Karandlaje,
Hon'ble Minister of State for Micro,
Small and Medium Enterprises, Labour and Employment,
Government of India.

Sri. Basavaraja S Horatti,
Hon'ble chairman of Karnataka Legislative Council

Sri. U.T. Khadar
Hon'bleSpeaker of Karnataka Legislative Assembly

Chairmanship

Dr. Sharanaprakash R Patil
Honble minister for Medical Education and Minister for Skill Development
Entrepreneurship and Livelihood,
Government of Karnataka.

Special Invitees :

Sri. Azim Premji
Chairman
Wipro company and Azim Premji Foundation

Honorary Presence :

Dr. Shalini Rajaneesh IAS
Chief Secretary,
Government of Karnataka

All Hon'ble Ministers, Members of Parliament, Members of Legislative Assembly and Council,

Welcomed by

Sri Mohammad Mohsin, IAS
Additional Chief Secretary to Government
Medical Education Department

Dr. B L Sujatha Rathod
Director of Medical Education,
Medical Education Department

Dr. Nagesh. N.S
Director,
Institute of Gastroenterology Sciences and
Organ Transplant, Bengaluru.

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How e-Khatas are stumping Kaveri 2.0

DIGITAL GRIDLOCK

Faulty data in the e-Khata system is proving a hassle to genuine property owners while illegality continues to thrive and errors remain uncorrected

SHREE D N
BENGALURU, DHNS

E-Khatas that the erstwhile BBMP started issuing, which is supposed to be considered an authentic source of the ownership of a property, is proving to be a problem for many, with buyers scrambling to get the documents fixed, and those who want to sell the properties getting stuck because of errors.

Srikanth S P, a resident of South Bengaluru, explains the problems that individual buyers face. "When they rolled out this eKhata system, I had assumed that the Property ID, along with the exact names — the same exact names as in our property tax receipt — would be migrated from the existing database. But that hasn't happened," he explains.

"In my case, my wife's name has been spelt wrongly. The moment I saw that error, I realised the Khata database and the property tax database are completely different," Srikanth says. He tried to fix the issue, but in vain.

"Now nobody knows who is responsible for correcting this. The local ARO says he has no power. They say it was done at the central level, but nobody knows who "central" is. They keep asking for Aadhaar, PAN, an affidavit, and photos. We submitted everything, but still the correction hasn't happened," he narrates the ordeal.

"For some time, the BBMP even showed an online Khata correction option, then removed it. Now there's no clear process, no accountability, and plenty of data errors — not just names, even dimensions are wrong," he says.

"This is clearly a design flaw. When a verified and authenticated database like property tax already exists, why didn't they use it? Normally, property tax data is linked to sale deed and registration records, so it's reliable. Instead, they entered everything separately, without clarity on the source," rues Srikanth.

Errors in apartment e-Khatas

A major issue is that Google shows only latitude and longitude for a given site. "For an apartment, it takes latitude and longitude, but how will it grab a third dimension of height? An apartment on the 3rd floor will have the same dimensions as the one on the 20th floor. The authorities have not found a way to sort this issue," says Anil Kalgi, a Bengaluru-based lawyer. He calls the whole process flawed.

He points to another problem. "Some e-khatas show super-built-up areas, and some show built-up areas; there is no uniformity. The undivided share (UDS) of land is mentioned as 00 in the e-khata for many apartments, as there is no provision to mention UDS, and only the total land of the building can be mentioned."

"For individual lands, this can be good, but for apartments, it has become a pain," says Kalgi. He says he has brought this issue to the concerned authorities, but has not received a reply to date.

Due to the errors in the e-Khata system, builders in the city are taking written undertakings from the buyers. One such undertaking explains what details can go wrong:

"I have agreed to complete the purchase of the above Apartment in the form of Sale Deed to be executed by you in my favour. I am aware that the registration process will have to be completed through Kaveri 2.0 online software. While uploading the particulars of the Sale Deed in Kaveri 2.0 Citizen Portal to secure approval and appointment for registration, on entering the E-Khata number, the information relating to the Apartment as recorded by the panchayath/ municipal authorities would be displayed automatically. In the said display most of the particulars of the Property provided in the Sale Deed are shown correctly but some of the particulars like the name of the Project, the extent of carpet area / built-up area / Tower / Block No and boundaries of the apartment are not shown. However, the super built-up area of the Apartment and number of car park/s is/are properly shown. Further undivided share of land is shown as Owner Share Area. Except the aforesaid, the rest of the particulars of the Apartment are displayed correctly in the system and in the Encumbrance Certificate.

I am aware that the particulars of the property are getting updated from the Government records and the same is un-editable by the citizens. Taking into account the Sale Deed is paramount to establish ownership, I request you to proceed with the registration of the Sale Deed... I place on record that the registration is completed on my request and will have no claim on you for the aforesaid unforeseen situation."

Such an undertaking can put the buyer at risk if the builder is fraudulent and the details are never corrected, especially in the case of disputed properties, say legal experts. The same data is extracted into the Encumbrance Certificate as well, which poses further problems, especially when the landowner's name is incorrect or not displayed, or when the land's dimensions are incorrect.

Problem of illegal layouts

While errors plague the genuine owners of individual sites, properties, and flats, with no recourse for correction, those who have connived with the system for a long time to create illegal records continue to do so, say citizens.

A complaint submitted by a citizen in North Bengaluru to the Greater Bengaluru Authority explains how the e-khata system can be fraudulent. According to it, local officials entered more than 50 B khata properties illegally and generated e-Khata on the basis of B Khata for the property, for an allegedly illegal layout in Attur village in Bengaluru North City Corporation limits, for which cases are pending against the developer in the court.

According to Google imagery, the layout is approximately 60,000 sq ft, while the official conversion order covers only 50,094 sq ft. The complainant notes that the 1 acre 6 guntas available is insufficient to legally house 50 plots of more than 1,200 sq ft while maintaining a 25-feet-wide road passing through the rows of plots. Yet the project has e-khatas.

An RTI query in this regard shows that the data for e-Khatas has been sourced from the B register of properties maintained by the erstwhile BBMP for tax collection, which technically cannot be used for any legal purpose.

Citizens feel that e-Khata has only helped fraudulent developers or illegal layouts legalise the illegalities."The buyers of such sites will be fraudulently sold the properties. In some cases, there may be a recourse later, but during arbitration, the amount of money to be given back to the buyer gets reduced, thus the builder makes free money," says Vasanth Veerasagara, a citizen of North Bengaluru who has been following the issue.

'Not a Kaveri 2.0 problem'

Mullai Muhilan M P, Inspector General of Registration and Commissioner of Stamps, says the problem is not with the Kaveri software; officials with the power to create e-Khata are responsible for errors and corrections.

"For years, illegal layouts used to come up, and our department had no role in stopping registrations because it was all manual entries; there was no way to know the illegality. We kept asking the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department and the Urban Development Department to integrate their databases to stop fraudulent property sales and the sale of a single property to multiple buyers. Finally, they have developed a system and integrated it with Kaveri," he explains.

"We are not going to change anything on our own. Municipalities have their own rulebooks to create Khatas and e-Khatas. We will only use the data they provide. We have no control over how the khata is created or the errors in it," he clarifies.

That said, the Department of Stamps and Registration has communicated to all stakeholders about the complaints regarding errors and issues and has asked them to resolve them.

"These are clearly not issues with Kaveri software, but implementation and legacy-data issues in the BBMP, GBA and corporations. Reverting to manual Khata would only create more problems. Stakeholder consultations have been held, departments have agreed to resolve the remaining issues, and corrections are being addressed step by step with inter-departmental coordination," he adds.

"These are teething problems. If we wait for perfection, the processes will only be delayed. All the departments are working to solve the issues. 80 per cent of the issue is sorted, and the remaining 20 per cent needs to be fixed," Muhilan explains. He also clarifies that it is the local officials who have the power to edit e-khata and correct errors, and that the Department of Stamps and Registration cannot do anything about them.

DH reached out to various officials of the Greater Bengaluru Authority for a response regarding e-Khata, but in vain.

Feedback:
pointblank@ deccanherald.co.in

Single firm awarded Rs 1,714-cr contract to handle debris

Same contractor previously won Rs 1,050-cr projects

DH SPECIAL

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bangalore Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML) has awarded a Rs 1,714-crore contract to handle 2,250 tonnes of construction and demolition (C&D) waste to a private firm, under a model placing collection, transportation and processing of waste with a single operator for 15 years.

The civic agency will pay Chaitra Civil Ventures LLP a tipping fee of about Rs 967 per tonne with an assured annual escalation of 5 per cent. However, it is not clear how much fee persons generating C&D waste are expected to pay to the private firm or the civic body.

However, the deal has raised serious questions as the private firm will be handling the entire chain of work—from collection to processing—which generally provides room for inflating the quantity of waste received. Moreover, the monopoly is expected to remove competitive pressure, forcing the whole of Bengaluru to depend on one agency for debris disposal.

The Urban Development Department (UDD) issued orders appointing the concessionaire under the design-build-finance-operate-transfer (DBFOT) model on December 29, 2025. The company is required to fully invest in setting up the processing plant and deploy vehicles to collect and transport debris to the processing plant.

The processing facilities, each 750 tonnes, are proposed to be set up on three government land parcels: eight acres on Survey Number 14 in Venkatapura village, Dasanapura (belonging to the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation); nine acres in Mylasandra village, Begur taluk (owned by the Revenue Department); and seven acres in Marenahalli village, Yelahanka.

3 packages & 1 firm

Contract value	Capacity
Package 1 Rs **571.59** cr	**750 tonnes**
Package 2 Rs **571.62** cr	
Package 3 Rs **571.62** cr	

Firm: Chaitra Civil Ventures LLP, Bengaluru

The project has been divided into three packages, each with a capacity of 750 tonnes per day and a concession period of 15 years. Each package is valued at approximately Rs 571.6 crore, with tipping fees set at around Rs 967 per tonne. All three packages have been awarded to the same firm.

While officials maintain that the arrangement has been made to ensure the city's roads, lakes and public spaces are free from debris, solid waste management experts note that the absence of multiple operators will affect performance, with little scope for course correction over the next 15 years.

Kareegowda, Chief Executive Officer of BSWML, was not available for comment.

It is worth noting that the private firm, Chaitra Civil Ventures Ltd, had earlier won a Rs 1,052-crore deal to supply 1,750 tonnes of construction and demolition waste to the existing processing plants in Kannur and Chikkajala for 15 years.

Altogether, the BSWML will spend Rs 2,766 crore, which is Rs 184 crore per annum.

BNP launches 'Mission 50' for civic polls, backs area sabhas

Party for decentralised governance over GBA model

BENGALURU, DHNS

Participants at the launch of the 'Mission 50' campaign in Bengaluru on Friday.

Challenging Bengaluru's governance status quo, the Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP) on Friday launched its 'Mission 50' campaign for the civic elections.

BNP, positioning itself as a professional alternative to legacy parties, pledged to win 50 wards to institutionalise citizen-led, decentralised governance.

The party criticised the recent shift to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), calling it a "19th-century solution to a 21st-century powerhouse".

Srikanth Narasimhan, founder and general secretary of BNP, likened the administration to a broken engine: "The government thinks changing the name from BBMP to GBA and adding more seats will fix the vehicle. It will not. The governance engine is fundamentally broken," he said.

The BNP's manifesto centers on reviving area sabhas, as mandated by the 74th Constitutional Amendment. The party argues that the GBA model centralises power under the chief minister, increasing overlap among agencies like BWSSB and Bescom without local coordination.

"We are not here to play politics; we are here to manage our home professionally," Narasimhan said, emphasising that 'Mission 50' aims to create a critical mass in the council to enforce the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act and ensure fiscal autonomy for wards.

The party showcased a diverse line-up of citizen-leaders, including IISc doctorates, tech professionals, and civic activists who have resolved over 10 civic issues daily without holding office.

From reclaiming footpaths in HSR Layout to bribe-free construction of the CV Raman Nagar skywalk, BNP highlighted its record of governance-first activism.

With over 50,000 volunteers, BNP plans to contest 100 wards, focusing on hyper-local accountability and transparent budgeting via a digital portal for public projects.

ITPB metro skywalk opens to ease last-mile connectivity in Whitefield

BENGALURU, DHNS: To address last-mile connectivity, an elevated walkway was inaugurated on Friday, connecting the Pattandur Agrahara metro station (Purple Line) directly to the International Tech Park Bangalore (ITPB) and Park Square Mall.

The ITPB metro skywalk spans 320 feet in length and is elevated 24 feet above the road, ensuring seamless pedestrian and vehicular flow at the ITPB hub.

Constructed with modern aesthetics, using durable structural steel and concrete, this elevated bridge withstands high foot traffic and delivers direct access from the metro station to the mall, eliminating road crossings for commuters and ensuring safer, uninterrupted movement for motorists below.

It stretches 320 feet in length.

Embracing sustainability, the skywalk features energy-efficient LED lighting and eco-friendly materials. It also prioritises accessibility, with smooth ramps, elevators, and wide walkways for effortless use by all, including those with mobility challenges.

Built with a budget of Rs 30 crore, the walkway aims to encourage 55,000 professionals at the IT Park to opt for public transport and improve traffic flow in and around Whitefield.

Ravishankar J, Managing Director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited, described the skywalk as an example of effective public and private collaboration that strengthens last-mile connectivity.

"Such seamless pedestrian linkages between metro stations and major activity hubs are essential to improving metro accessibility, encouraging public transport usage, and supporting sustainable urban mobility in Bengaluru."

Govt appoints members to BMLTA; CM to head authority

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government has appointed members to the newly formed Bangalore Metropolitan Land Transport Authority (BMLTA), a mix of elected representatives, government officials and private individuals.

The move comes days after the government notified rules to operationalise the authority.

The BMLTA will be chaired by the Chief Minister, with the Bengaluru Development Minister and Transport Minister named as vice-chairpersons. The Energy Minister will be a member. Retired IAS officers ISN Prasad and Uma Shankar have also been appointed as members.

Apart from IAS officers representing various departments, eight private individuals have been inducted.

They include Prof Abdul R Pinjari (Indian Institute of Science), Irfan Razack (Prestige Group), Pawan Mulukutla (WRI India), Manas Das (Outer Ring Road Companies Association), Jagadish Chandra Sharma (Indian Urban Pvt Ltd), architect Abhay Zachariah, road expert Dr Jaya R Shinganmakki, and Dr V Anjaneyappa, an associate professor at a private engineering college.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Bengaluru Habba: Food, games, learning and data programme; National Gallery of Modern Art; from 10 am onwards.

State-level seminar on 'Threats and Precautions of the 'VG-Gram-G' Law that Undermines Employment Guarantee'; SG Siddaramaiah, KP Suresh, Sharada Gopal to attend; Organised by MGNREGA Protection Federation-Karnataka; Gandhi Bhavan; 10.30 am.

Maneyangana Maathukathe (Courtyard Conversations): H Janardhan, KM Gayatri to attend; Organised by Department of Kannada and Culture; Nayana Auditorium; 3 pm.

Lecture series: On poet Lakshmisha's 'Jaimini Bharata' by Pavagada Prakash Rao; K Sreedhar Rao, S Raghunath to attend; Organised by Dr Pavagada Prakash Rao Amrita Mahotsava Committee; Patti Auditorium, Srirama Mandir; 5.45 pm.

CULTURAL

Purandara Dasa Aradhana Music Festival: In the presence of Suvidyendra Tirtha Swamiji; Organised by Srinivasa Utsava Balaga; Uttaradi Matha, Basavanagudi; 6.30 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.0°C
Minimum	17.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	85%
Sunset (Jan 17)	6:12 pm
Sunrise (Jan 18)	6:45 am
Moonrise	4:30 am
Moonset	4:00 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Invites to be published in thiscolumn should be sent to:
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Please note that hard copieswill not be accepted

BTP to launch verification stickers to curb illegal autos

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Autos without recalibrated meters will face a Rs 500-fine during a three-day enforcement drive, starting Saturday.

To curb unauthorised autorickshaws, the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) plans to introduce verification stickers to be displayed on the exterior of the autos.

The stickers will help both police and commuters identify unauthorised autos, said Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic). "This is still being planned; we will execute it soon," he said.

Display cards

The BTP is also set to launch QR code-enabled display cards for autos.

Linked to the Astram App, these will display the driver's photograph, address, contact, licence, and vehicle registration. The display cards were slated for a mid-January launch, but were delayed by technical snags. "We are positive the cards will be available by the end of January," Reddy said. Every driver will need separate display cards for each auto rented. The cards are customised for drivers and not linked to owners or permits, Reddy explained.

Verification stickers and QR-enabled display cards will help curb illegal autos, said MA Saleem, DG&IGP of Karnataka.

"Both identification documents will be mandatory for all autos in Bengaluru," he said.

Only 45,000 autos recalibrated for new fares

As of May 2025, Bengaluru had 3.6 lakh registered autos, but only 45,000 have calibrated meters for the new fares introduced in August.

After four years, the base fare rose to Rs 36 for the first 1.9 km, up from Rs 30.

The fare for each subsequent kilometre is now Rs 18, earlier Rs 15.

Yet, complaints over fare violations persist, with overcharging rampant.

"We have raised awareness and extended the meter recalibration deadline to December-end, but the response from drivers has been poor.

"From Saturday, we will run a three-day drive to nab autos not calibrated with the new fares. Offenders will be fined Rs 500," a senior official from the Department of Legal Metrology said.

Rs 100-crore donation promise ends in Rs 35-lakh fraud case

Head of educational trust alleges conspiracy by group posing as donors

MANJUNATH SHETTAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

A 37-year-old managing trustee of a private educational trust alleged she was cheated of Rs 35 lakh by a group promising a Rs 100-crore donation from Gujarat- and Delhi-based companies.

A senior police officer said the complainant was approached in September 2025 by Amarpalli Suresh, who claimed he could arrange large donations for educational institutions. Suresh later introduced her to Venkataramana Bhat, who would help process the donation.

The accused allegedly convinced her that a donor, Atul Kumar Sharma, was ready to give Rs 100 crore, but formalities and documentation were needed. She shared all required documents.

Bhat allegedly claimed some documents were missing and that Sharma, based in Hyderabad, needed to visit Bengaluru to complete the process. She was asked to make the travel and hotel arrangements.

In October 2025, Sharma met the group at a city hotel, along with Suresh, Bhat, and Bhat's son, Padyumna.

Sharma allegedly assured the trust the process would be completed in a couple

of months. He stayed at a five-star hotel, with the complainant paying Rs 1 lakh for expenses. He also demanded Rs 20 lakh as "security and processing charges".

Trusting Sharma, the complainant transferred Rs 35 lakh online in early December 2025. Sharma claimed the Rs 100-crore donation would be routed through a private firm.

But the promised donation never materialised.

On December 17, the accused claimed the Rs 100-crore donation had failed due to technical issues and promised a refund. Despite repeated follow-ups, she received nothing.

By January 2, the accused stopped responding. She approached the police, alleging a conspiracy to cheat her by collecting money under false promises.

The Hennur police registered a case under Sections 3(5) and 318(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023. Investigation is on to trace the money trail and identify each accused's role.

The officer said, "We have collected all bank transaction details. CCTV footage of meetings is yet to be obtained.

"The complainant's involvement is also being verified, as she believed the conmen and did not discuss the transactions with senior trust authorities."

Woman dies after setting herself, baby on fire

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 29-year-old woman and her four-year-old child died after she set them on fire following a quarrel with her husband, police said on Friday.

The incident occurred on Wednesday evening at Krishnaappa Layout in Sanjay Nagar. The deceased, Seetha and her daughter, were both natives of Nepal, police said.

Police said that Seetha and her husband, Govind Bahadur, also from Nepal, worked as domestic help in Sanjay Nagar and stayed in a small house. They often fought over domestic issues, especially those arising from the husband's frequent travels to Nepal and extended stay.

Police officials said one such argument triggered the incident on Wednesday evening.

The mother and daughter were declared dead at a hospital. A case has been registered and investigation is underway.

Delegation seeks police action against Puneeth Kerehalli

BENGALURU, DHNS: A delegation of activists on Friday met DG&IGP MA Saleem and Additional Director General of Police (Law & Order) R Hitendra, seeking action against murder accused Puneeth Kerehalli and his associates for criminal intimidation, harassment, unlawful assembly, and stoking hatred.

"We write to draw your urgent attention to deeply troubling conduct by Puneeth Kerehalli, a person currently facing murder charges and on bail, who has repeatedly entered migrant worker dwellings and sheds, interrogated them about nationality, and demanded identity documents while threatening and intimidating them. These actions are illegal, undermine the dignity and safety of workers, and risk provoking mob violence," the delegation said.

The delegation, Geeta Menon, Radha K, Geeta B, Mohamed Hayyan and Tanveer Ahmed, said the top officers have assured action.

Woman enlists minor in burglary

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Sampigehalli police have arrested a woman for a house burglary, alleging she used a minor to commit the theft.

The accused, Reshma, 45, of DJ Halli, had the minor dress as a boy to evade detection and used a two-wheeler with fake number plates, police said.

The duo was traced after a house break-in reported on January 13. Reshma was arrested the next day from Amarjyothi Layout, where she was found hiding with the minor girl.

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5	Microbiology	Assistant Professor	1	MBBS, MD	
6	General Surgery	Assistant Professor	2	MBBS, MS	
		Senior Resident	2		
7	General Medicine	Assistant Professor	3	MBBS, MD	
8	Radiology	Senior Resident	2	MBBS, MD	

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'Dialogue au Mât' by Lucas Struna.

French aerial performances at Freedom Park

BENGALURU, DHNS: The French Institute in India and Alliance Française Network are bringing 'Elevation', a contemporary aerial performance, to Bengaluru on January Saturday and Sunday at Freedom Park as part of BLR Hubba.

The performance features two aerial works — 'Approach 17. Opening Act' and 'Dialogue au Mât (Le Mât)', choreographed by Yoann Bourgeois and Lucas Struna, respectively.

The performances explore suspension, balance, and the human urge to rise beyond limits.

Bourgeois' 'Approach 17. Opening Act' turns a staircase into a site of poetic risk, where bodies hover, fall, and rebound in precise negotiation with gravity.

"Dialogue au Mât' by Struna draws from the Indian discipline of Mallakhamb, reimagined as a contemporary solo around a vertical pole.

The travelling production is part of the annual tours organised by the French Embassy in India, aiming to introduce leading French artistes to Indian audiences. 'Elevation' will also be staged in Ahmedabad and Delhi.

JD(S) to fight Bengaluru civic polls alongside BJP

Decision follows Maha Yuti's win in Mumbai elections

BENGALURU, DHNS

Putting an end to the uncertainty over their alliance fighting the polls to the five municipal bodies in Bengaluru, the JD(S) confirmed that it would fight the elections, likely to be held before June 30, alongside the BJP.

Confirming that the allies would fight the local polls together, Union Minister and Karnataka JD(S) president H D Kumaraswamy said, "There is no confusion. We have made up our mind, and will continue our alliance with the BJP, and contest the Bengaluru local polls together."

On Friday, JD(S) convened a meeting attended by the party's legislators from Bengaluru, and chaired by party supremo and former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, and Kumaraswamy, wherein the party leadership decided on continuing its alliance with the BJP. In fact, the regional party arrived at this decision within a few hours of the announcement of the BJP-led Maha Yuti alliance's victory in the Mumbai local elections.

There had been considerable confusion around whether the JD(S) would extend its alliance with the BJP to the local level. In fact, Deve Gowda's remark about his party contesting local body polls by itself only added fuel to the speculation. However, the former PM had made no mention of Bengaluru in his statement, thereby leaving a question mark over whether the allies would contest the polls in the state capital together.

Sources said that party leaders had been instructed by Kumaraswamy against discussing the alliance in public. "Any misunderstanding between the allies at the grassroots are to be brought to the notice of the party leadership," a source said.

In the wake of the Maha Yuti's victory in Mumbai, Kumaraswamy is reportedly optimistic about the alliance's chances in Bengaluru. "Kumaraswamy has asked all party leaders and workers to work with the BJP and ensure the NDA's victory in the five local bodies across Bengaluru," another source said.

The Union Minister also reportedly called upon his party colleagues to raise awareness among the public about the various infrastructure woes plaguing Bengaluru including the city's pothole-riddled roads. Deve Gowda, meanwhile, is learnt to have urged the party leaders to educate citizens of Bengaluru about the contributions he has made to the growth of the city, both as the Chief Minister and PM.

Although the JD(S) has clarified its stance on fighting the Bengaluru local polls together, no decision has been taken on whether the two parties will contest elections to Zilla Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats, and other urban local bodies together.

Behind closed doors, Cabinet clears sports complex at...

Jakkur, From Page 1

In a letter dated December 20, 2025, Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh wondered why the sports department had not acted on the proposal despite Cabinet approval on November 6. She directed officials to inform the high court of the government's decision and to submit a sketch of the proposed sports complex.

Sources say the government plans to develop facilities such as a mini golf course, tennis courts and a convention centre at the site. The move is also expected to benefit private developers who have been unable to undertake high-rise constructions in the vicinity due to air traffic restrictions. With premium FAR policy, the real estate lobby was all the more active.

Clearly not happy with the new proposal, aviation experts argue that the government should instead diversify the aerodrome by promoting aero-sports such as paramotoring and paragliding, alongside pilot training, to foster air-mindedness among citizens rather than diverting the land for non-aviation purposes.

Govt mulling deputing experienced degree college teachers to universities

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government is mulling deputing experienced lecturers from state-run degree colleges to fill vacancies in the postgraduate departments at the 32 government universities.

Sources said that the government was looking to depute teachers to universities for a five-year period. The state government is reportedly keen on fixing the many lacunae in the higher education system, and one of its top priorities is to address the problem of shortage of teachers. To that end, the government is thinking of promoting experienced lecturers from degree colleges as professors, and deputing them to universities.

"The Higher Education Department will compile a list of eligible lecturers across subjects, which will be presented to the varsities. The universities can then submit a formal request for a specific number of professors to be deputed to their respective institutions. Besides benefitting the students, this will enable degree college professors to evolve into serious academics," said a source in the Higher Education Department.

Furthermore, deputation to universities will markedly increase the chances of professors being considered for the post of Vice-Chancellors. In fact, only recently, the State Government Degree College Teachers' Association had complained to the State Education Policy Commission about being overlooked as contenders for the post of Vice-Chancellors in favour of university professors. The commission subsequently allowed for degree college teachers to be considered candidates for the Vice-Chancellor's post.

"Deputation to universities will give degree college professors the opportunity to become principals, even Vice-Chancellors," the source added.

Given that most of the state-run universities have not recruited faculty since 2007, they are grappling with an acute shortage of professors, tiding over the crisis by leaning on the services of guest lecturers.

BLR Habba 2026 drums up Bengaluru's cultural spirit

BENGALURU, DHNS

The steps of the Vidhana Soudha turned into a riot of rhythm and colour on Friday evening, as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated 'BLR Habba 2026' by beating the traditional Dollu and Nagari drums.

The 10-day cultural festival seeks to bridge Bengaluru's tech-driven image with its cultural roots.

Addressing a gathering of schoolchildren, tech professionals and folk artistes, Siddaramaiah invoked Basavanna and Sufi saints to stress manushyatva — humaneness beyond caste and religion.

"We are humans first. What we do between birth and death matters," he said, urging Bengaluru's 1.4 crore residents to learn Kannada to better integrate with the city's spirit.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah beats Nagari, a traditional percussion instrument, to inaugurate BLR Habba 2026 in city on Friday. Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti is also seen.

The festival, organised by the Department of Kannada and Culture with partners such as the UnboxingBLR Foundation, will feature 150+ programmes across 30 locations with 800 artistes, including international performers. Events include Thindi Habba, Nataka Habba and Rasthe Habba, officials said.

The launch was attended by actors Shivarajkumar and Jayamala, Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti, and Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, among others.

The evening's highlight was the Namma Jaatre procession, with folk troupes performing Veeragase, Kamsale and Yakshagana along the Vidhana Soudha stretch.

The full schedule is available at www.blrhabba.in.

Plans afoot to develop Badanavalu Khadi Centre into tourist spot

BENGALURU, DHNS: Badanavalu Khadi Centre that was visited by Mahatma Gandhi in 1927 and 1932 will soon be converted into a tourist destination by reviving all the historical landmarks and highlighting the significance of khadi, said Priyank Kharge, Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj.

Mahatma Gandhi had visited Badanavalu to encourage the khadi movement and provide momentum to the concept of "Gram Swaraj".

The Minister held discussions with Nanjangud MLA Darshan Dhruvanarayan, officials from the Tourism Department and the Khadi Board to prepare a roadmap for the project.

Under the proposed plan, the development will be undertaken across seven acres in Badanavalu village, incorporating facilities such as the history of khadi weaving practiced in the village, a khadi production unit, training centre, design centre, khadi testing and storage facilities and a khadi research centre, the Minister said during the meeting.

He added that the centre will also feature details about freedom fighters from Mysuru district and a museum, among other tourist attractions.

Priyank said, "Khadi was an integral part of India's freedom struggle. It had a far-reaching vision and multidimensional impact. Gandhi attached great importance to khadi as a household industry, viewing it as a symbol of self-reliance, simplicity, and freedom."

India world's brightest growth...

Global economic, from Page 1

Two-thirds of the chief economists surveyed expect strong (60%) or very strong (6%) growth, a substantial improvement compared to 31% in the September edition of the report. "South Asia remains the brightest growth spot among emerging regions, with India anchoring the outlook despite mounting trade headwinds," it said.

Despite US tariffs on Indian exports, the Reserve Bank of India's recent assessment of a 'goldilocks' economy reflected a surge of 8.2% year-on-year real GDP growth in the September quarter alongside near-zero inflation.

The WEF said India is continuing on its reform pathway by reducing employment restrictions, and AI adoption is surging alongside investments from US technology firms.

"Over one-third of respondents (36%) anticipate a significant positive impact of AI investments on growth over the next two years, it added.

Globally, the survey showed three defining trends for 2026: Surging AI investment and its implications for the global economy; debt approaching critical thresholds with unprecedented shifts in fiscal and monetary policies; and trade realignments, WEF Managing Director Saadia Zahidi said.

BJP-Sena on top in Mumbai polls

Mumbai polls, from Page 1

The Congress will have its mayors in Latur and Chandrapur; the Shiv Sena (UBT) in Parbhani while the Hitendra Thakur-led Bahujan Vikas Aghadi will helm the civic body in Vasai Virar in Palghar district. The Indian Secular Largest Assembly of Maharashtra (Islam Party) will have its mayor in the Muslim-dominated town of Malegaon in Nashik district.

In the BMC, which has 227 electoral wards, the BJP has emerged as the No. 1 party, winning/leading in 89 to 90 seats. The BJP's ally, the Shiv Sena, managed 29 seats. The NCP, which contested separately, won just three seats. The Shiv Sena (UBT) got 65 seats, MNS six and NCP (SP) one. The Congress has won 24 seats.

"The Maha Yuti will have its Mayor in Mumbai, a Marathi and a Hindu," said Fadnavis.

However, Legislative Assembly speaker Rahul Narwekar said: "There would be a Maha Yuti and BJP Mayor in Mumbai."

In Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, which have 165 and 128 seats, respectively, the BJP won 90-plus and 85-plus seats. The NCP-NCP (SP) alliance bagged 14 and 34 seats, respectively.

In Thane, Shinde's bastion, the Shiv Sena got 38 seats and the BJP 24 of the total 131 seats. The Shiv Sena (UBT) managed just two seats.

Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen won or was leading in 100-plus seats in 11 cities including Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, where it is leading in 16 seats. Other places where it has opened accounts include Mumbai, Thane, Dhule, Amravati and Jalna.

In Nagpur, the hometown of Fadnavis, the BJP has crossed 100 seats. The Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi has won four seats each in Nanded, Latur and Akola.

MESMERISING DISPLAY

The nine BAE Hawk Mk 132 jets of Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team (SKAT) of the Indian Air Force fly past the ruins of Bidar fort, painting the sky trails of saffron, white and green smoke, on Friday evening. DH PHOTO/LOKESH V BIRADAR

Government of Jharkhand, Rural Works Department
JHARKHAND STATE RURAL ROADS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (JSRRDA)
3rd Floor, F.F.P. Building, Dhurwa, Ranchi 834004

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (National Competitive Bidding Through e-Procurement)

Re-eTender No.- 10/ 2025-26- **Ranchi, Dated: 15.01.2026**

PR No- 366990 dated 24.11.2025 (3rd Call)

The undersigned on behalf of Government of Jharkhand invites item rate bids through e-Procurement from the eligible bidders registered* in appropriate class with any State/Central Government/State /Central Government Organization for construction and maintenance for five years of the works (List of schemes shall be displayed in the website pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in) of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna PM-JANMAN (Batch-1, 2025-26).

Sr. No	District Name	Block Name	Tendering Package	Road Name / Bridge Name	Road Length (Kms)	Sanction Construction Cost (in lakhs)	Sanction Maintenace Cost (in lakhs)	Total Sanction Cost with Maint. (in lakhs)	Total Package Cost (in lakhs)	Earnest Money (In Lakh)	Time of Completion (in month)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Purbi Singhbhum	Dumaria	JH-06-PMJANMAN-JSR-01 (2025-26)	L021-HATANBEDA TO JANGAL BLOCK	13.700	1,336.72	58.25	1,394.97	1,394.97	27.90	15
2	Purbi Singhbhum	Dumaria	JH-06-PMJANMAN-JSR-02 (2025-26)	L022-Bhomarpani to Bhitaramda	10.100	897.39	53.89	951.28	1,075.77	21.52	15
	Purbi Singhbhum	Potka		L022-SUNDARNAGAR-JADUGODA PWD ROAD TO JHARIYA	1.200	119.48	5.01	124.49			
3	Purbi Singhbhum	Chakulia	JH-06-PMJANMAN-JSR-03 (2025-26)	L021-Katabani BT Road to Domaro	1.000	92.70	5.07	97.77	630.80	12.62	15
	Purbi Singhbhum	Dumaria		L023-PWD Road Patdanga to Manda	3.450	290.04	19.36	309.40			
	Purbi Singhbhum	Musabani		L021-DIGRI MORE KOPTA ROAD TO KULABHADA	1.000	84.15	3.45	87.60			
	Purbi Singhbhum	Patamda		L021-BOTA MADHOPUR RCD ROAD CHIMTI TO CHIMTI PAHARIYA TOLA	0.900	73.69	3.01	76.70			
	Purbi Singhbhum	Patamda		L022-Jamardih PMGSY Road to Jhujhka	0.600	57.64	1.68	59.32			
				Total	**31.95**	**2951.81**	**149.72**	**3101.53**	**3101.54**	**62.04**	

The bid should be submitted online in the website **pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in** . The bidders should have valid Digital Signature Certificate for online submission of bid.

Details of bid submission is as under:

Procurement Officer	Place of Opening	Availability of tender (on-line) for bidding		Last date & time of seeking clarification	Last date and time of bid submission	Date & time of opening (on-line) of tender	
		From	To			Technical bid	Financial bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
Engineer in Chief, JSRRDA, Ranchi	Engineer in Chief JSRRDA, Ranchi	**19.01.2026 at 10.00 AM**	**02.02.2026 upto 5.00 PM**	**27.01.2026 upto 2.00 PM**	**02.02.2026 upto 5.00 PM**	**02.02.2026 at 05.30 PM**	To be informed later

** Non-registered bidders may also submit bid, however the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authority before signing the contract.*

*** Cost may change.*

Note :- 1. Amount of Bid Security should be taken as mentioned in the Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding Document.
2. Cost of Bid Document (Rs. 10000) and Bid Security (as mentioned in the Bid Data Sheet) shall be deposited **online** in form as mentioned in Bid Data Sheet failing which the bid will be treated non responsive and action shall be taken as per Sec. 2 of ITB clause 12.2 (d).
3. In case, it is found, even after the award of work that the bidder has submitted/ uploaded any false/erroneous/fraudulent statement/document, he/she is liable for blacklisting and forfeiture of Bid Security.
4. Bidders must submit GST registration certificate without which bid is liable to be rejected.
5. Bidders whose names appear in the Debar/blacklist of RWD or any department of GoJ/GoI (including JSRRDA) shall not be allowed to participate in the above bids.
6. Bids submitted by bidders, who have long pending ATR(s) made inordinate delay in execution of earlier allotted construction/ maintenance works of PMGSY, may be rejected summarily.
7. In case of any discrepancy/dispute about units in BOQ, units as mentioned in Current SOR on which BOQ has been prepared shall prevail.
8. Participating bidders are free to submit grievances, if any, against the decision of technical evaluation within five days from the date of uploading of decision of technical evaluation only through email at **jh-ce@pmgsy.nic.in** Grievance submitted after stipulated period shall not be considered.
9. Bidders must have valid registration with Employee Provident Fund organization under EPF and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1952 failing which the bid shall be rejected.
10. Bidders must not quote rate for routine maintenance. The amount for routine maintenance as indicated in the Bill of Quantities must be acceptable to bidders.
11. For unbalanced bids, extra security will be required to be deposited by the bidder at the time of Agreement.
12. The undersigned reserves the right to cancel the tender at any stage without giving prior notice/reason.

All other details can be seen in the bidding document which is available in website **pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in** as per schedule mentioned above.

Sd/- Engineer-in- Chief
Rural Works Department- Cum- JSRRDA, Ranchi

PR 370707 Rural Work Department (25-26)_D

Former minister & veteran Lingayat leader Bheemanna Khandre no more

BIDAR, DHNS

Former minister and veteran Lingayat leader Bheemanna Khandre (103) died of age-related issues at his residence here on Friday.

He is survived by a son - Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre - and five daughters. His wife Lakshmibai Khandre and eldest son Vijaykumar Khandre, a former MLA, had passed away earlier.

Bheemanna Khandre was shifted to a private hospital in Bidar a week ago after he developed breathing difficulties. After he showed signs of recovery, he was shifted home a few days back, where he was kept under round-the-clock medical supervision. Khandre's condition worsened on Friday evening and he breathed his last at 10.50 pm.

Bheemanna Khandre

After serving as a lawyer, Bheemanna began his public life by getting elected as president of Bhalki municipality in 1953. In 1962, he was elected as the Member of Legislative Assembly from Bhalki and was re-elected for three more times. He also served as MLC twice. Bheemanna served as transport minister in Veerappa Moily's Cabinet.

Khandre had received a pat on the back from Congress leader Sanjay Gandhi in 1976 for getting 2,000 people undergo vasectomy in a day at a family planning camp in Bhalki.

Bheemanna Khandre had real concerns for farmers. He was the founding-chairman of sugar factories at Hallikhed and Hunaji. He was instrumental in getting Naranja and Karanja irrigation projects implemented.

He served as the president of Akhila Bharath Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha for a significant period and will be remembered for his efforts, along with Shamanur Shivashankarappa and N Thippanna, to keep the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community united.

Last rites today

The mortal remains of Bheemanna Khandre will be kept for public viewing at his residence at Gandhi Gunj in Bhalki on Saturday. He will be laid to rest next to his wife Lakshmibai's samadhi at Shantidham off Chikalchanda Roads in Bhalki, later in the evening. The last rites will be conducted as per the Veerashaiva-Lingayat customs, Eshwar Khandre told reporters.

MoEF panel issues safeguards to set up landfills

BENGALURU, DHNS: Three months after exempting waste processing units and landfills from environment impact assessment (EIA) rules, an expert committee of the union environment ministry has recommended a set of "environmental safeguards".

On Oct 3, 2025, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) issued a draft notification which said prior environment clearance (EC) was not required for establishing common municipal solid waste management facilities (CMSWMF), including landfills.

The exemption had been opposed by conservationists who expressed concern over the possible backdoor exemption to waste to energy plants.

The expert appraisal committee (infrastructure 2) of the ministry took up the matter on January 2 and decided to recommend a set of environmental safeguards in the absence of EIA assessment.

Many of the 21 safeguards refer to guidelines issued by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and several rules set by the ministry.

Chiefly, the guidelines direct that all CMSWMFs should follow CPCB guidelines, including siting criteria.

A sensitivity screening is mandatory for proximity to forests, wetlands, water bodies, eco-sensitive zones and habitations. Segregation of waste is mandatory.

Those who seek to set up such plants have to comply with rules regarding management of hazardous waste, solid waste as well as those related to prevention of air and water pollution.

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By

Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

17th January 2026 | Malda Town Station | 11:00 AM

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Governor, West Bengal

Lakshman Prasad Acharya
Governor, Assam

Mamata Banerjee
Chief Minister, West Bengal

Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma
Chief Minister, Assam

Nitin Jairam Gadkari
Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways

Ashwini Vaishnaw
Union Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & information Technology

Shantanu Thakur
Union Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and waterways

Dr. Sukanta Majumdar
Union Minister of State for Education and Development of North Eastern Region

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Prison panel suggests heightened security and surveillance

Report submitted to HM; implementation holds the key

BENGALURU, DHNS

A high-level committee on prison reforms comprising IPS officers has recommended technological upgrading, heightened security and surveillance measures and better inmate rehabilitation for Karnataka jails.

The report was presented to Home Minister G Parameshwara on Wednesday by R Hitendra, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order).

He was accompanied by committee members Inspector General of Police Sandeep Patil, Superintendents of Police C B Rishyant and Amarnath Reddy.

Deputy commissioners and SPs of respective districts were also members of the committee. The members visited all Central Prisons in Karnataka, Tihar Prison in Delhi and Chanchalguda Central Prison in Telangana before finalising the recommendations, the report seen by *DH* said.

The committee noted that there was a severe prison staff shortage with vacancies of up to 40% to 47%, leading to the prisoner staff ratio being significantly higher than the Model Prison Manual norm of 1:6.

The report said that Parappana Agrahara Prison houses 4,834 inmates with only 571 staff members and 388 vacant posts. Therefore immediate action is required to fill all vacant posts to ensure safety, security, and effective prison administration.

The committee further suggested a staff rotation with officials "not allowed to work in one place for more than three years and a cooling period for a minimum tenure of two years", along with implementation of modern security and administrative training methods conducted annually.

The committee further suggested establishing an internal intelligence network, implementing comprehensive CCTV surveillance, including inside barracks, Harmonious Call Blocking System (HCBS) with 5G capability to curb the usage of modern smartphones, portable jammers, wifi monitoring, body-worn cameras, voice recording in toilets, AI cameras to detect smoking and use of cell phones, central prison command centre, 30-foot perimeter security, solar fencing, alco-breath analyzers and drug detecting kit, SOP for lawyers visiting inmates, with separate cabin and CCTV in the meeting room, ban on outside food, scrutiny of clothing and biometric-enabled stores.

Under administrative measures, the committee suggested proper segregation of prisoners, encouraging electronic visitation, Female Staff Reallocation and Recruitment, review of FIRs registered, workplace harmony and integration of all departments like social welfare, health, education, and IT for management of prisons. They also suggested welfare and reformative methods like post-release benefits, wellness activities and counselling services.

Sources in the prison department, however, weren't convinced by the report. "Similar, if not the same, recommendations have been made in the past as well.

However, the government's top officials seldom take an interest in actually fixing the root causes, like corruption and transparency in the transfers of officials. It remains to be seen if the current government makes an effort to implement the recommendations," the sources said.

Indelible ink: Siddu asks EC to act

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday flagged "weakening basic safeguards" and asked the Election Commission (EC) to show transparency amid reports that the indelible ink used in Maharashtra's municipal elections could be erased with sanitiser and acetone.

"...media reports and viral social media videos from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation polls show so-called 'indelible' ink being wiped off easily with sanitiser, acetone and other agents, raising grave concerns about electoral credibility - concerns echoed across Maharashtra and beyond," Siddaramaiah said in a tweet.

"This is not an isolated glitch - it's another troubling chapter in the larger story of Vote Chori, where genuine questions are met with denial, deflection, or silence, and trust in democratic institutions is eroded," he said, adding: "Democracy survives only when every vote is sacred and its safeguards are real."

Siddaramaiah said the EC must act with "transparency, accountability and corrective measures now".

2 more bodyguards held in Ballari

BALLARI, DHNS: The CID on Friday held two more bodyguards of MLA Bharath Reddy in connection with the Ballari violence. Sources said Baljith Singh and Mahendra Singh were detained and questioned at Brucepet police station. After medical examination they were taken to Bengaluru. The police have already arrested private bodyguard Gurucharan Singh in the case.

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Regulatory sandbox: Govt to amend law keeping AI in mind

To allow testing of innovative tech in controlled environment

BHARATH JOSHI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Karnataka wants to amend the existing law to operationalise a regulatory sandbox that will allow controlled testing of disruptive technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge said.

The minister chaired a meeting recently to discuss "some crucial amendments" to the Karnataka Innovation Authority (KIA) Act.

Enacted under the previous BJP government in 2020, the KIA was positioned as India's first pan-sector initiative for private companies to test ideas unregulated under law. Five years on, the regulatory sandbox under the KIA has not taken off.

Earlier, this month, Priyank reviewed the regulatory sandbox framework, its operational workflow, implementation mechanism, legal aspects and global benchmarks.

"We discussed some crucial amendments to the existing KIA Act that will help operationalise and implement the regulatory sandbox framework. This will allow innovative technologies to be tested in a controlled environment, with reasonable relaxation of state regulations where required, so that genuine innovation is not held back by regulatory barriers," Priyank said.

The minister said he is trying to move the amendments in the next budget session of the legislature in March.

"The final framework (of the sandbox) will be opened up soon for consultation with startups, industry, state departments and think tanks before it is formally introduced," Priyank said. "Our intent is to make the framework decisively pro-technology while remaining accountable and safe."

The sandbox should have been operationalised last year. "It got delayed because we were waiting for the union government's guidelines on AI. The guidelines came only recently. We don't want to do something that contradicts those guidelines," Priyank told *DH*.

Karnataka has had its share of regulatory tussle with disruptive technology. In the transport sector, for instance, carpooling, shuttle services and bike taxis are restricted under the motor vehicles rules.

"We have banned Rapido (bike taxis). But what if it was in a regulatory sandbox?" Priyank said. "There's no point in starting businesses and for us (government) to tell them that they can't run. Some have become unicorns."

He indicated that amendments to KIA will factor in AI. "Technology has changed. There was no AI back when the law was made," he said.

The minister also flagged concerns with AI. "The more we dive deep, the more we're getting to know," he said. "For example, Grok was found to have racial bias."

Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, SUNY ink knowledge partnership

Dr M R Jayaram (left) and Dr Havidan Rodríguez (right) formalise the knowledge partnership.

The Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (RUAS), Bengaluru, hosted a high-level delegation from the University at Albany, State University of New York (SUNY), led by its president Dr Havidan Rodríguez.

The SUNY delegation comprised Dr Carol Kim, Provost; Dr T Keshav Das, Vice President for Research and Economic Growth; and Dr Michele J Grimm, Dean of Engineering and Applied Sciences. The delegation held detailed discussions with Dr M R Jayaram, Chairman, Ramaiah Group and Chancellor, RUAS, and his leadership team, culminating in the signing of four Memoranda of Agreement that together establish a long-term, structured knowledge partnership between the two institutions.

The agreements lay the foundation for deep collaboration across engineering education, advanced skills development, faculty and student exchange, joint capstone projects, curriculum co-design and translational research, with a particular focus on future-facing domains such as semiconductors, VLSI design, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence and applied sciences. A flagship element of the partnership is the joint development of a B.Tech programme in VLSI Design and Technology at RUAS, benchmarked against the University at Albany's globally recognised programmes in nanoscale engineering.

On the occasion, Dr Jayaram said, "This partnership reflects a shift from episodic international engagements to a mature knowledge alliance. Our intent is co-creation - of curricula, talent and translational capability - aligned to India's national priorities and global technological trajectories."

Dr Havidan Rodríguez, stated, "UAlbany is committed to mission-driven global partnerships that combine academic excellence with societal impact". Later, he inaugurated the Dassault-Ramaiah Innovation Centre, established in partnership with Dassault Systemes. The Centre is envisioned as a hub for industry-integrated learning, digital engineering, advanced design and applied research.

Collectively, the agreements signal a shared commitment to building institutional capacity, human capital and innovation ecosystems, and to exploring the future establishment of advanced skills and translational research platforms in India, in partnership with global academia and industry.

The SUNY–RUAS collaboration is expected to roll out in phases beginning in 2026.

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CM announces Rs 6 cr grant for hockey stadium, swimming pool in Tumakuru

TUMAKURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday said that the state government would provide a grant of Rs 6 crore for the construction of a hockey stadium and a swimming pool in Tumakuru.

Home Minister and district in-charge minister G Parameshwara had sought a grant of Rs 25 crore for building world-class facilities for hockey and aquatics

After inaugurating the Karnataka State Olympics at Mahatma Gandhi Stadium here, Siddaramaiah said, "The chief minister said the state government will give a cash reward of Rs 6 crore for an athlete from the state who wins a gold medal in the Olympics. The silver and bronze medal-winning sportspersons from the state will get a cash reward of Rs 4 crore and Rs 3 crore, respectively. The state government is providing a 3% job quota for sportspersons in police and forest departments and 2% in other departments. This is being done to ensure financial stability and spur them for athletic excellence, the CM said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah receives State Olympics torch from athletes during the inauguration ceremony at MG Stadium in Tumakuru on Friday. Home Minister G Parameshwara, KOA president K Govindaraju, legislators T B Jayachandra, B Sureshgowda, G B Jyothi Ganesh and others are seen.

Siddaramaiah said that he was a big sports fan. "I was an active kabaddi player during my childhood days. I love watching cricket and FIFA world cup matches, he added. Karnataka Olympic Association president K Govindaraj said that efforts will be made to bring Khelo India Games to Tumakuru.

A total of 1,900 male sportspersons and 1,700 female athletes will vie for top honours in 27 disciplines in a week-long meet that would conclude on January 22.

Bengaluru will host hockey, rifle shooting and swimming events while Tumakuru will hold the remaining competitions.

No clue about Shivakumar's Delhi visit, says CM

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Friday that he was not aware of his deputy D K Shivakumar's visit to Delhi.

Speakeing to reporters after flagging off State Olympics meet in Tumakuru, Siddaramaiah said, I don't know why D K Shivakumar has gone to Delhi. I have no idea about his meeting with the high command."

When asked if K N Rajanna would be re-inducted into the Cabinet, the CM said, "I will discuss with the high command in this regard."

Apex Bank prez polls: Siddaramaiah, DKS candidates to lock horns

BENGALURU, DHNS

The issue of "power transfer" in the Congress government of the state continues to remain a suspense. However, the two rival factions, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, are set for a face off during the upcoming election to the post of the president of Karnataka State Cooperative Apex Bank.

Siddaramaiah close aide K N Rajanna (who was removed from the Cabinet over his open criticism of Rahul Gandhi on 'vote chori' row) will take on Shivakumar's brother-in-law and MLC S Ravi in the politically charged election.

Rajanna, who was elected the president of Tumakuru District Central Cooperative Bank for the seventh consecutive term last September, has filed his nomination for Apex Bank's board of directors' election to be held on January 23. On Friday, MLC S Ravi and Shivamogga DCC Bank Chairman Manjunath Gowda also filed their nominations.

While, each DCC has delegated their nominees they would be elected as directors in the elections to be held on January 23. The 19 directors of the DCCs would then elect the president of the Karnataka State Co-operative Apex Bank, two weeks later.

Rajanna has already served as the Apex Bank president twice and is hoping for a third term. Ravi is in the contest to gain control over the cooperative sector which could prove to be a shot in the arm for "CM-in-waiting" Shivakumar.

Your duty to protect officials, Ashoka tells chief secretary

BENGALURU, DHNS

Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka on Friday asked Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh to ensure government officials and employees work in a conducive atmosphere without political pressure or interference.

Shalini met Ashok in his chamber at Vidhana Soudha and received a petition from him.

The petition lists at least nine instances where government employees came under political pressure and either died by suicide or lodged complaints.

The latest case mentioned by Ashoka was that of KAS officer Amrutha Gowda who was threatened and abused by Congress leader Rajiv Gowda in Chikkaballapura. The Congress has issued a show-cause notice to Gowda.

"I've asked the chief secretary to take strict action against those who abuse and attempt to assault officials," Ashoka said. "I told her that it is her duty to protect officials."

Ashoka charged that many officials had died by suicide in the last two years. "Congress goons have turned government officials into party offices," he said. "If this continues, there will be no protection for officials."

Ashoka also pointed out that no action had been taken against culprits who were responsible for the deaths of police sub-inspector Parashuram, second division assistant Rudranna, librarian Bhagyavati among other instances of government employees facing external pressures.

On Gowda not being arrested till date, Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy said: "Let's see what the government and chief secretary do. Is it a rubber-stamp chief secretary or one who protects officials? I've already spoken to the chief secretary. Let's see what happens."

Suspend Rajiv Gowda, DKS urged

Karnataka Congress general secretary S Manohar on Friday wrote to Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar urging "immediate suspension" of party leader Rajiv Gowda for allegedly using obscene and derogatory language against a lady KAS officer.

"Derogatory and obscene language against officers performing their duties within the constitutional framework cannot be justified under any circumstances," Manohar stated.

Welcoming the party's decision to issue a show-cause notice to Gowda, Manohar said it was insufficient to address the seriousness of the issue.

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Farmer burnt alive while dousing fire on crop

VIJAYAPURA, DHNS: A 62-year-old farmer was burnt alive when he was attempting to douse fire in his sugarcane farm in Banahatti village of Sindagi taluk on Friday.

The deceased has been identified as Mallanagouda Biradar.

Tahshildar and police officials visited the spot.

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES
MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DME), MEGHALAYA
PASTEUR HILLS, SHILLONG
Email ID: pasteurinstituteshil@gmail.com Tel No.: 0364-2591510/94851 06663

No. DHSME&R/SMC/TENDER/IV/31/2025-26/117 Dtd: Shillong, the 15th January, 2026

CORRIGENDUM

In continuation of the tender notice for "Supply and Installation of Equipment/Items for the Department of Skill Lab as per NMC at Shillong Medical College Shillong" under the Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME) (NIT No. DHSME&R/SMC/TENDER/IV/20/2025/10033), it is hereby notified that the Directorate has been relocated.

Accordingly, the address for submission of tenders is revised as under: ***"Directorate of Health Services Medical Education & Research (DME), MMSRB Building DHS (MI) Top Floor, Health Complex, Nongkynrih - Laitumkhrah, Shillong, Meghalaya - 793003"***.

All tenders and related documents shall henceforth be submitted at the above address only. Tenders submitted at the earlier address after issuance of this notice shall not be considered.

All other terms and conditions of the tender remain unchanged. This Corrigendum shall form an integral part of the tender documents.

Sd/-
Director of Health Services
Medical Education & Research (DME),
Pasteur Hills, Meghalaya, Shillong

MIPR No.: 2594
Dated: 16-01-2026

SAD DEMISE

DOB : 08.01.1923

DOD : 16.01.2026

With profound Grief we inform the sad demise of our beloved Founder

Dr. BHEEMANNA KHANDRE

A life devoted to selfless service, unwavering values, and social justice. His passing is an irreparable loss to the Lingayat community and society at large. Though he is no longer with us, his ideals and legacy will continue to inspire generations.

Final rites will be performed at : Shanti Dham, Chikalchanda Road, Bhalki, District Bidar, Date: 17.01.2026 (Saturday) Time: 5:00 PM.

MAY HIS LIFE &
VALUES CONTINUE TO GUIDE US ALWAYS

Bheemanna Khandre Institute of Technology, Bhalki

(Formerly known as Rural Engineering College, Bhalki)
(Approved by AICTE New Delhi & Govt. of Karnataka,
Affiliated to VTU Belagavi, Accredited by NAAC of UGC with B++ grade and also by Institution of Engineers (I), Kolkatta), Bhalki, Dist. Bidar (Karnataka), 585329

MAHARASHTRA LOCAL BODY POLLS: Deva Bhau keeps 'Bhai' in good humour, delivers blow to 'Dada'

Dhurandhar Fadnavis asserts position after Maha win

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Riding high on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's agenda of "Hindutva" and "Vikas", the BJP asserted its continued dominance in Maharashtra politics on Friday: The saffron party and its Maha Yuti allies won two dozen of the 29 civic bodies, including in India's financial capital of Mumbai.

With this "Dhurandhar"-type victory, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, the architect of the unprecedented victory, further cemented his position as a formidable leader in the state and national politics.

Deva Bhau, as the trouble-shooter is popularly known, ensured that the key two allies — the Shiv Sena, led by Eknath Shinde, fondly called Bhai, and the NCP, led by Ajit Pawar, lovingly called Dada — had enough takeaway messages, and that his position as the CM was unquestionable.

Fadnavis dealt a blow to Pawar, who chose to ally with his uncle Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP) in the family bastion of Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad, while ensuring that the results also kept Shinde in check.

"We have received a record-breaking mandate in many municipal corporations, which underscores that people want honesty and development. That is why they voted for the BJP," he said.

Fadnavis also invoked the late Balasaheb Thackeray, saying that the BJP had the late Shiv Sena founder's blessings.

The BJP is now set to have a mayor in the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) for the first time — the biggest New Year gift from Fadnavis to Modi and the BJP's chief strategist Amit Shah, who had dreamt of establishing a "triple-engine sarkar" in Mumbai.

In the process, Fadnavis ended the quarter-century rule of the Thackerays in Mumbai, despite Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav and MNS founder-president Raj surviving to fight another day, even though the cousins' reunification did not bring the desired results.

The Thackeray brand had been in the shadows since the June-July 2023 Shiv Sena split. However, the fight Uddhav put up with Raj showed that they are the real inheritors of Balasaheb's legacy.

Ironically, the BMC defeat came just a week before Balasaheb's birth centenary on January 23 and six months prior to the diamond jubilee celebrations of the party he founded on June 19, 1966.

Over the past three years, BJP leaders and Shinde had been claiming Balasaheb's legacy. However, these results showed that "Tiger Zinda Hai".

VBA, AIMIM & others

Meanwhile, the Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) made its presence felt: 12 of its corporators were elected from Nanded and Latur in Marathwada and Akola in Vidarbha.

It did not gain much in Mumbai, where it allied with the Congress, but the alliance helped the latter, which got considerable support from the VBA vote bank.

The Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), however, managed to create some magic as it won or was leading in around 100 seats.

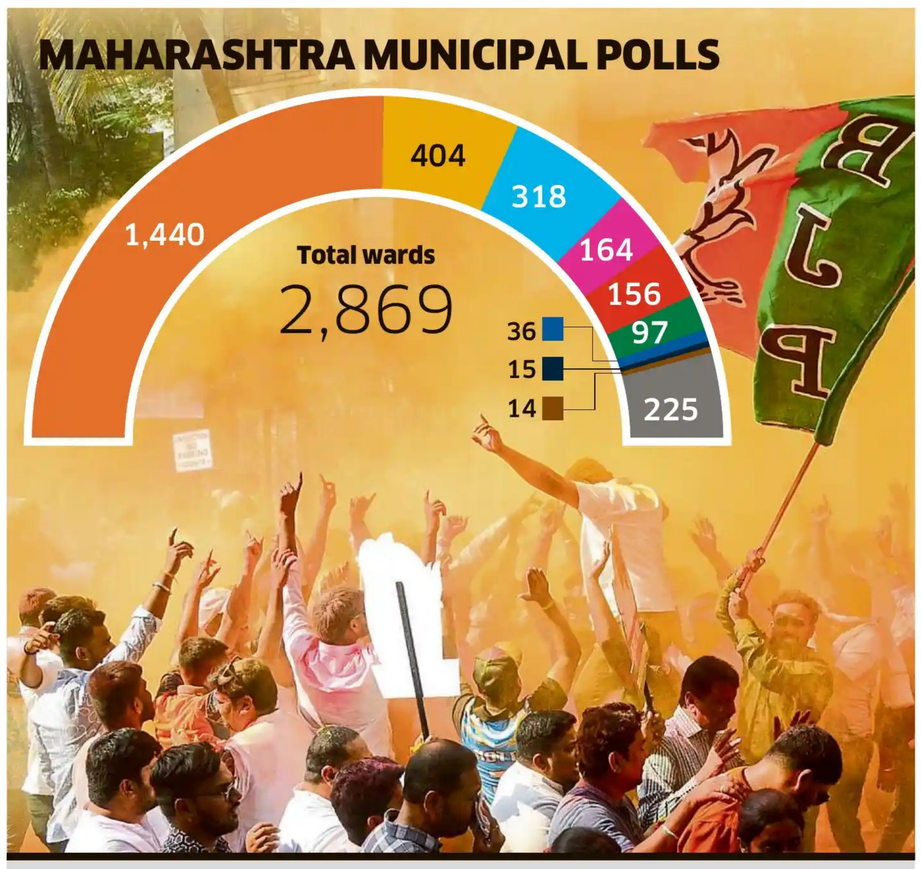
The AIMIM won 33 seats in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, the divisional headquarters of the Marathwada region. The city was renamed from the earlier Aurangabad a few years ago.

The party also won 20 seats in the Nashik district's Malegaon, 15 seats in Amravati, 14 in Nanded Waghala, 10 in Dhule, and two in Jalna.

'Results reflect trust in PM'

The BJP on Friday hailed the Maha Yuti's Maharashtra civic polls performance as 'historic', saying the results reflected the people's 'growing trust' in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told reporters at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi: "The historic and unprecedented victory... clearly shows that people's acceptance and trust in the BJP and the NDA under PM Modi's leadership are continuously growing."



BJP workers celebrate a party's candidate's victory in the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation elections on Friday. PTI

> Thank you Maharashtra! The dynamic people of the state bless the NDA's agenda of pro-people good governance. Our track record and vision for development have struck a chord. This is a vote to add momentum to progress and celebrate the glorious culture the state is associated with.
>
> **- Narendra Modi**
> Prime Minister

> The resounding victory of the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance in the Maharashtra municipal corporation elections clearly shows that the people across every corner of the country have complete faith only in the development policies of the NDA led by PM Shri @narendramodi ji.
>
> **- Amit Shah,** Home Minister

> Election commission gaslighting citizens is how trust has collapsed in our democracy. Vote Chori is an anti-national act.
>
> **- Rahul Gandhi,** Congress leader

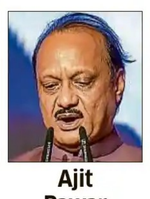
BJP workers celebrate their victory in the Thane Municipal Corporation elections. PTI

'Pawar-play' fails in Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad

PUNE, PTI: Despite allying with the faction led by his uncle, NCP chief and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Friday failed to win the party's traditional bastions of Pune and neighbouring Pimpri-Chinchwad, as the BJP decimated both the NCPs in the civic-body polls.

During the campaign, Ajit Pawar launched a frontal attack on his state-level ally, the BJP, targeting its local leadership for 'derailed' development and corruption in the two civic bodies over the past nine years.

Sharad Pawar



Ajit Pawar

The NCP's reduced strength in Pune is expected to considerably diminish Ajit Pawar's clout within the BJP-led Maha Yuti alliance in the state.

Seeking to stop the BJP, which threatened his dominance in the region, he joined hands with the NCP (SP), more than two years after parting ways with uncle Sharad Pawar and splitting the party.

In Pune, Ajit Pawar was seen taking on Union minister and the city's BJP MP Murlidhar Mohol. In Pimpri-Chinchwad, he targeted local BJP MLA Mahesh Landge, alleging massive corruption in the civic body.

Notably, Sharad Pawar was virtually absent from the campaign. His daughter, Baramati MP Supriya Sule, stayed largely in the background.

NCP Pune city executive president Pradeep Deshmukh said, "While highlighting civic issues in Pune and PCMC, 'Dada' (as Ajit Pawar is called by supporters) put forth a well-balanced manifesto that assured free Metro and PMPML (bus) rides for all, exemption from property tax for homes below 500 sq ft, and improved water supply. We accept the defeat with humility."

Gauri Lankesh murder accused wins in Jalna

MUMBAI, DHNS: In a surprising development, Shrikant Pangarkar, an accused in the sensational murder of journalist-activist Gauri Lankesh and the Nalasopara arms-ammunition haul case, was elected as a corporator to the Jalna Municipal Corporation.

Shrikant Pangarkar

Pangarkar contested independently from Ward 13 of the JMC against the BJP candidate. However, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, which contested separately in Jalna, did not field any candidate against him.

Gauri Lankesh, a journalist-activist, was shot dead outside her Bengaluru residence on September 5, 2017. She worked as an editor at Lankesh Patrike, a Kannada weekly founded by her father, P. Lankesh, and also ran her own weekly, Gauri Lankesh Patrike.

Pangarkar was granted bail by the Karnataka High Court on September 4, 2024. Ahead of the Assembly polls in October 2024, he was also inducted into the Shiv Sena and nominated as chief of the Jalna seat campaign. However, Shinde, who was then the CM, cancelled the appointment amid strong criticism.

Pangarkar was a municipal councillor in Jalna from 2001 to 2006 of the undivided Shiv Sena headed by late Balasaheb Thackeray. Later, he was associated with Right-wing organisations.

Pangarkar was also arrested in August 2018 by Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) in connection with the seizure of crude bombs and weapons in Nalasopara and booked under the Explosives Act, the Explosive Substances Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). As of now, he is out on bail in both cases. After filing his nominations, he had said that he had come into politics after a gap, but received a good response.

'Rasmalai' jibe backfires, candidates for whom Annamalai campaigned win

MUMBAI, PTI: A sour insult turned into a sweet victory for BJP candidates that party leader K Annamalai campaigned for in the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) polls, as they swept their wards on Friday, giving a befitting reply to MNS chief Raj Thackeray's 'rasmalai' jibe against the Tamil Nadu politician.

BJP's Tejinder Singh Tiwana and Yogesh Varma won from ward 47 and 35, respectively in Malad West, while Dakshata Kavthankar secured a win from ward 19 in Charkop, according to results released by the BMC.

Tiwana, the president of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha's Mumbai unit, shared the organisation's social media post with a picture of 'rasmalai' saying, "Results win in Mumbai, noise doesn't. Thank you, Mumbai."

Annamalai had canvassed for these candidates during his visit to Mumbai, holding public meetings and interacting with local voters.

During the campaign, the Tamil Nadu leader had triggered a row after he described Mumbai as an "international city", remarking that it was "not a Maharashtra city", and drew sharp reactions from political opponents.

Responding to the statement, MNS chief Thackeray mocked Annamalai by referring to him as "rasmalai", invoking a controversial slogan associated with the Shiv Sena's early political campaigns.

Despite the online trolling and political jibes, the BJP candidates backed by Annamalai went on to secure victories.

Congress central leaders to meet TN counterparts over Assembly polls

E T B SIVAPRIYAN & SHEMIN JOY
CHENNAI/NEW DELHI, DHNS

Congress central leadership will meet its senior leaders from Tamil Nadu on Saturday evening here to fine-tune its strategy for Assembly elections later this year, amid a section in the party seeking to put pressure on the alliance leader DMK for more seats to contest and a power-sharing arrangement in the post-poll scenario.

The meeting assumes significance against the backdrop of a section of the party raising the decibel levels over Congress playing second fiddle to the DMK, which they believe is detrimental to its organisational growth amid resentment among the cadre over not getting enough traction in the administration.

Sources said the Saturday meeting will see a section of party leaders demanding that the leadership take a call on the demand for a power-sharing arrangement, which the DMK has not agreed to whenever it was in government, as well as more seats. This section wants to bargain hard with the DMK, with superstar Vijay entering politics with his TVK.

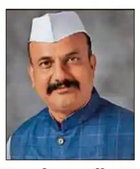
Sources said the demand for six ministers in a DMK-led government post-election will be made at the meeting. However, sources said most of the leaders do not want a break with DMK but would like to exert pressure on the MK Stalin-led party.

Sources told *DH* that the DMK leadership had conveyed to the Congress that power sharing was not feasible and that the Dravidian parties had never gone to the people with the idea of coalition politics. The DMK has cited the failure of the 50:50 seat-sharing between the DMK and Congress in the 1980 assembly elections to drive home the point that power sharing won't work in state politics.

"It was conveyed that such a promise will not go down well with the DMK cadre. Whenever the Congress was allotted a higher number of seats, the party won less. The current strike of 18 MLAs against the 25 the party contested is the best in many years for the Congress, and that's why we ask them not to seek more seats," a source told *DH*.

'Cong to have its mayors in 5 cities, 350 corporators'

MUMBAI, PTI: Maharashtra Congress president Harshwardhan Sapkal on Friday claimed his party will have mayors in five cities and around 350 corporators across the state, asserting it would also be part of power arrangements in at least 10 municipal corporations.



Harshwardhan Sapkal

According to the Congress, the party is in a position to install its own mayors in Latur, Chandrapur, Bhiwandi (Thane district), Parbhani and Kolhapur, which were among the 29 municipal corporations where polling was held on January 15 and counting was taken up on Friday.

Talking to reporters in Buldhana, Sapkal said while the Congress' performance in the civic polls may not be fully satisfactory, the party fought an 'ideological battle' without compromising its principles and emerged as the principal Opposition force in the state.

"The Congress today stands as the second-largest party in Maharashtra. Wherever possible, we contested independently, and in some places through alliances, with the aim of strengthening the party ideologically and organisationally," he noted.

Alleging large-scale irregularities, Sapkal accused the ruling BJP-led alliance of misusing money power and facilitating bogus voting.

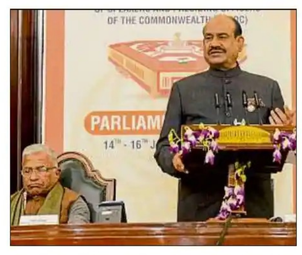
Democratic institutions need to be transparent & accountable: LS Speaker

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Democratic institutions can remain strong and relevant only when they are transparent, inclusive, responsive and accountable to people, said Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday in his valedictory speech at the closing ceremony of the Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC).

Birla handed over the chairmanship of the 29th CSPOC to Rt Hon Lindsay Hoyle, Speaker of the UK House of Commons.

"Transparency fosters public trust by ensuring openness in decision-making, and inclusivity guarantees that every voice — especially of those on the margins — is heard and respected in the democratic process. These principles sustain the legitimacy of democratic institutions and strengthen the enduring bond between the citizen and the State," he said.



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla delivers the valedictory address to conclude the 28th CSPOC in New Delhi. PTI

In his speech, Birla recalled the vision behind the CSPOC's establishment 56 years ago: "The conference was conceived to ensure continuous dialogue among democratic legislatures of the Commonwealth and to explore new ways of enhancing parliamentary efficiency and responsiveness."

He said the 28th CSPOC carried this legacy forward with renewed vigour and substance.

Birla added that the unprecedented participation of the largest number of countries in the CSPOC's history was a defining feature of this Conference.

He said that discussions on the responsible use of AI in Parliaments, the impact of social media, citizen engagement beyond elections, and the health and well-being of Members of Parliament were particularly thought-provoking.

FLEXING FIREPOWER

Phased battle array to be Republic Day highlight

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

As the military evolves for the warfare of the future, India will showcase new formations like the Bhairav battalion and Shaktiban regiment at this year's Republic Day parade, whose theme is 150 years of Vande Mataram, said a top official on Friday.

For the first time, a phased battle array display will be presented on Kartavya Path to give viewers a sense of how a battle unfolds in real time, from a recce to the strike.

The weapons that will be on display include Brahmos cruise missile, medium range surface-to-air missile, Aakash and Nag missile systems, Dhanush howitzers and a new universal rocket launcher.

Defence Secretary R K Singh said there would be 18 marching contingents from the forces, including the Bhairav contingent in high-step march, and the Ladakh Scouts. The Shaktiban regiment, a new artillery unit focusing on future warfare, and the Drone Shakti initiative, which pushes for indigenous drone development, will also be in the parade.

"A phased battle array will make the parade interesting for viewers as it will integrate the manpower and weapons. The air display will also happen in a phased array format. But there would be no drone flying. The drones will be a part of the static display," he said.

CISF personnel during rehearsals in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

The flypast will comprise Rafale, Su-30 and MiG-29 combat jets; P8I surveillance aircraft, C-130J and C295 transport aircraft; and Apache, light combat helicopters, advanced lightweight helicopters and Mi-17 helicopters.

European Council President Antonio Costa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will attend the celebrations as chief guests, highlighting India's growing strategic engagement with the European Union. There will also be a small naval contingent from the EU.

Singh said 17 tableaux from the states and 13 from Union ministries and departments would roll on the central boulevard. Six will have Vande Mataram as the theme.

Of the 77,000 seats, tickets are being sold for 32,000 seats. In addition, 10,000 special guests will be housed in the enclosures.

A series of paintings by artist Tejendra Kumar Mitra and published in 1923 will be displayed in the enclosures and printed on the card and tickets.

An unusual, silent marching contingent led by two Bactrian camels from Ladakh will also feature on the Kartavya Path. The camels will be followed by four Zanskar ponies, four raptors, 10 Indian breed army dogs and six conventional military dogs, as the Remount and Veterinary Corps of the Indian Army will showcase the critical role played by animals in safeguarding the nation's most challenging frontiers.

BJP to get new prez on Jan 20

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The BJP on Friday announced the schedule for the upcoming polls to choose the next party president.

A notification, issued by presiding officer and senior party leader K Laxman, stated that nominations were scheduled for January 19, with the official results to be declared on January 20.

The notification stated that nominations were to be filed between 2 pm and 4 pm on Monday, with scrutiny to be conducted between 4 pm and 5 pm. Withdrawals were allowed between 5 pm and 6 pm.

"The election will be conducted on Tuesday if the need arises; otherwise, the announcement will be made the same day," the notification said.

The election is expected to be an unopposed affair, as were the cases with outgoing president J P Nadda and his predecessor Amit Shah.

The newly-appointed working president of the party, Nitin Nabin, is expected to take over the reins of the party.

Nabin, who is the BJP's second working president, would then be the saffron party's youngest president.

While the party does not mandate a working-president post, it is now expected of an upcoming president to take up the position before being appointed to the top post.

DECCAN HERALD
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Fighting corruption, with conditions

With the Supreme Court delivering a split verdict on the powers of investigating agencies to probe public servants, the uncertainty over the matter is likely to continue for years. Article 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, introduced along with other amendments in 2018, made a sanction from the government mandatory for such probes. The agency is required to obtain approval from the Union or the state government, or the relevant authority to conduct an inquiry about charges of corruption. Justice B V Nagarathna of the two-judge bench held that the Article was unconstitutional; Justice K V Vishwanathan upheld it, while calling for an independent authority, such as the Lokpal or the Lokayukta, to issue the approval for the investigation. The case will now go to a larger bench.

Under the Prevention of Corruption Act, in its original form, investigation agencies could register a crime involving a public servant and initiate a probe. The government's approval was needed only before a charge sheet was filed. The 2018 amendment took away this power from the agencies, making the government's permission imperative. Under the amendments, even reporting of corruption cases by citizens was made more difficult. Provisions to address some of the specific offences, such as the misuse of official position, were excluded. It was claimed that the amendments would bolster the fight against corruption. They were also projected as a cover for proactive officials from action under the law. But the overall impact of the amendments has left the law diluted.

Mandating prior sanction to probe government officials dilutes the law. SC's split verdict extends the impasse

Justice Nagarathna described the introduction of Section 17A as an attempt to resurrect an earlier provision of the law which was struck down by the Supreme Court. She said the Section had inherent deficiencies that made its provisions arbitrary and that its claimed objective of protecting honest officers cannot override the law's primary objective, which is preventing corruption. It should also be noted that Justice Vishwanathan, even while upholding the Section, wanted the probe to be sanctioned not by the government, but by an independent authority. The provision can be used to shield corrupt officers by delaying the investigation. Furthermore, the competent authority which has to approve the investigation is often part of the system to which the accused individual belongs. Justice Nagarathna's view that Section 17A allows the government to pressurise officials to conform to its interests also has merit. The split verdict is set to steer the narratives around probity in public life and the extent of enforcement – a resolution in court appears distant.

A statutory assertion of personal liberty

The proposed Karnataka Freedom of Choice in Marriage and Prevention and Prohibition of Crimes in the Name of Honour and Tradition Bill 2026 is a grim acknowledgement that 'honour' killings and related violence are not relics of a feudal past but a continuing social reality. The murder of Manya Patil in Hubballi, allegedly for marrying across caste lines, and numerous similar cases, underline why the state has gone beyond general criminal laws to frame a specific statute. At its core, the Bill makes a clear constitutional assertion. It explicitly recognises an individual's autonomy over life and marriage, placing personal liberty above social control, and asserting that consent of family, caste or clan is unnecessary. In doing so, it consciously breaks from the Bommai government's pernicious 2022 anti-conversion law, which subjected marriages and conversions to State scrutiny and prior notice. The new bill treats such scrutiny as a source of danger rather than protection, seeking to insulate couples from both familial and bureaucratic interference.

Legally, the Bill attempts to fill gaps in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). While the BNS punishes acts such as murder, grievous hurt and intimidation, without regard to motive, the new law defines 'honour' and 'tradition' as aggravating factors rooted in caste and community control. By mandating stiff minimum sentences, the proposed law seeks to counter the social legitimisation that often shields perpetrators. Its preventive architecture – special cells, protection mechanisms, and district-level forums – also goes beyond the purely punitive framework of the BNS. The interaction with the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act is equally significant. Unlike the SC/ST Act, which applies only when the victim belongs to a Scheduled Caste or Tribe, the new legislation is caste-neutral, targeting the motive rather than identity. However, the Bill is not without concerns. While it eases justice for victims of caste-based abandonment, shifting the burden of proof on the accused in cases of alleged false promise of marriage in inter-caste relationships risks misuse, despite built-in safeguards.

Proposed law promises targeted action against 'honour' crimes. Enforcement must now meet intent

Most importantly, Karnataka's experience with the SC/ST Act offers a sobering lesson. Despite stringent provisions, conviction rates in atrocity cases remain low, largely due to weak investigation, poor prosecution, and social pressure on witnesses. New laws, however well-intentioned, cannot substitute for effective enforcement. If this Bill is to be more than a moral statement, the state must invest in professional investigation, witness protection, and prosecutorial capacity. Without that, the promise of freedom of choice will remain powerful on paper, but fragile in practice.

RETHINKING WELFARE

In Global North and South, a contrast in capitalism

The North's rights-based social security systems contradict its prescription of free markets and minimal State for the South

K NANJARAJE URS

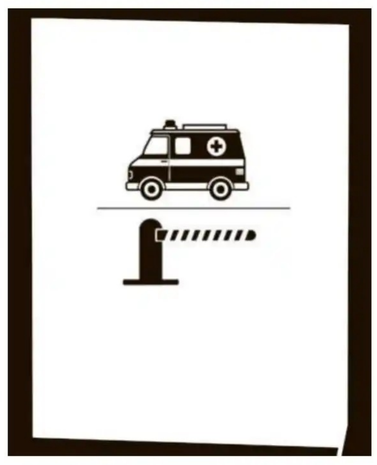
In much of Europe and in countries such as Australia, holding a public Medicare card comes with a quiet but powerful assurance. Besides free treatment, the health ministry individually contacts residents to undertake age-specific cancer screening, like pap smears for women over 25 or stool tests for people over 50. Follow-up consultations and treatments, if any, are free. These reminders arrive every year; no applications, proof of poverty, or personal appeals are required. The State assumes responsibility for prevention, not just cure.

Similarly, an unemployed person searching for work can apply for subsistence allowances online, often without any face-to-face interaction with government offices. Income support is deposited directly into bank accounts while public employment services assist with job matching, training, and reskilling. The presumption is not suspicion but support.

These lived realities contradict the dominant narrative that the Global North promotes globally, one of free markets, minimal states, and individual responsibility. In practice, markets are embedded within strong public institutions that absorb risk, redistribute resources, and protect citizens across the life course. These are not exceptional welfare measures; they are routine features of everyday life in the Global North.

Compare this with the shallowness of the current Indian debate on so-called "freebies". In India, social spending is often seen as fiscally irresponsible populism rather than as an essential function of the modern state. The term "freebie" itself reflects the absence of an institutionalised understanding of social security. In the Global North, the 'cradle-to-coffin' social security is not dismissed as giveaways. They are treated as investments in human capability, productivity, and social stability. What appears as discretionary largesse in the Global South is, in fact, routine governance in functioning democracies. This framing is striking given that the Indian diaspora in the Global North openly accesses these systems, from healthcare and unemployment benefits to child support and pensions, while often criticising similar measures in India.

This person-versus-person framing obscures the reality that universal public services are designed as social security for all across the life cycle. Even middle-class citizens who temporarily fall into vulnerability through illness or unemployment receive timely and targeted support until they recover. In much of the Global South, however, illness, unemployment, disability, and old age continue to be treated as personal misfortunes. Karma rather than shared societal risks.



This difference matters. When social support is delivered through *ad-hoc* schemes rather than rights-based institutions, it becomes politically contestable and morally suspect. The problem is not that India provides too much social support, but that it provides it in fragmented, poorly institutionalised ways that invite the language of charity rather than citizenship. The "freebies" debate is, therefore, not about excess welfare, but about the absence of a coherent social security architecture.

Culturally, social protection is so deeply entrenched in the Global North, not even pro-privatisation leaders like Margaret Thatcher were able to dismantle the National Health Service. Any attempt to undermine the NHS has historically triggered fierce public resistance. Similar patterns are evident across Europe, Canada, and Australia, where comprehensive social security enjoys broad cross-party consensus. Social security is not viewed as charity; it is treated almost as a civic faith, integral to national identity and democratic legitimacy. Importantly, independent media continuously monitors these systems, publicly exposing failures in hospital waiting times, welfare delays, or gaps in aged care. Accountability flows from the State to the citizen, not the other way around.

A systemic imbalance

The visibility of the State reflects this orientation. In the Global North, the most visible public institutions are ambulances, maintenance crews, nurses, social workers, and emergency services. These institutions signal that the primary role of the elected State is to facilitate well-being and manage collective risk. The State is the "third parent," sharing the responsibility for a person's upbringing and protection alongside families and communities.

In much of the Global South, the contrast is stark. The most visible face of the State is often the police or enforcement machinery. Public institutions are experienced less as service providers and more as instruments of control. Welfare systems, where they exist, are narrow, underfunded, and procedurally hostile. Citizens are required to prove need repeatedly, while the State is rarely held accountable for systemic failure. Social security is treated as charity, not a right.

This imbalance is reinforced by international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, which have long promoted privatisation, austerity, and "small government" reforms across the Global South. Essential services such as healthcare, education, water, electricity, and transport are recast as market commodities. Yet the same ideology is conspicuously absent in the Global North, where public institutions remain robust, publicly funded, and politically protected.

The experience of the Global North demonstrates a simple but powerful truth: strong public institutions and social security are not barriers to prosperity. They are its foundation. The question is not whether states can afford social security, but whether they can afford the continued human cost of its absence. Reclaiming this vision in the Global South is not ideological excess; it is the unfinished project of modern democracy itself.

(The writer holds a PhD in Public Policy from NLSIU and is a social scientist based in Australia, specialising in improving governance solutions for social and environmental challenges)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Before we switch off the engine

EVs are good. If only they had the soul of the internal combustion engine...

THEJAS ANAND

The difference between evolved and non-evolved histories is often marked by the ability to engineer mobility—to move people, transport large objects, and connect distant places. Even today, how we progress from different phases of life depends largely on our ability to be mobile, often globally so. In that arc, buying an automobile has often been the pinnacle of personal liberty in modern history.

Motoring, to me, feels like evolution in motion. And yet, there is something quietly dystopian about conversations that imagine a future entirely without internal combustion engines. I personally own an electric scooter and can vouch for its impressive efficiency and practicality. But when it comes to pleasure, I confess, I still prefer the alternative — my 650 CC Royal Enfield Classic. It is undeniably a gas guzzler. Still, the joy it delivers, the sounds it makes, and the vibrations through the handlebars as petrol furiously propels me forward create the feeling of a machine that lives and breathes. That sense of soul is something my zippy e-scooter cannot replicate.

Motoring—and the internal combustion engine—has defined generation after generation, aspiration after aspiration, and family after family. I assume there are other motor enthusiasts lying awake at night, wondering what we are evolving to as a species and as a globally mobile society.

If that sounds presumptuous here, I admit it freely. The connection I have with the internal combustion engine is deep-rooted and sentimental. Whether it was a journey from A to B, air travel, or international road trips, my travels have been greatly enhanced by the soul of the internal combustion engine.

As a fact, in my youth, I would calm down after a heavy meal only in a moving vehicle. A blue Mahindra Jeep at that time. Perhaps this places me out of step with the times. Today, I see in younger generations a deeper sensitivity towards the planet and sustainable motoring, and hence a lesser nostalgia for the internal combustion engine.

So, where do we go from here—and how?

My own conclusion is that the answer must go beyond utility, whether the alternative is hydrogen-powered, hybrid or electric. Without an experience that offers equal or greater pleasure, I do not believe enthusiasm for journeys will be sustained or transcend into the next phase of global society. Any worthy successor to the internal combustion engine must remain driven by humans, not robots. Many tasks can be automated; a pleasurable drive cannot and should not be one of them.

Human beings deserve to continue the establishment and purity of motoring for the fun and pleasure we derive from it. Before all is lost for good, and we are whittled down to dull A-to-B commuters, forever working on our laptops, it may be worth pausing to remember the joy we once found on the road—and to ensure that motor enthusiasts, too, have a place in the future we are building.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Local elections are about restoring trust, respect

This refers to 'A promise revived, but doubts persist' (Jan16). At its core, this is not just a legal or administrative delay but it is a quiet erosion of citizens' dignity. When people are denied the right to choose who governs their streets, drains, and neighbourhoods, democracy becomes distant and hollow. A city cannot thrive on IT parks and taxes alone; it needs voices at the ground level. Repeated postponements send a troubling message that convenience of power matters more than the consent of the governed. Restoring local elections is not merely about meeting a deadline—it is about restoring trust, agency, and respect to ordinary citizens who have waited far too long to be heard.

Nazneen Khan, Bengaluru

Accountable governance

Apropos 'A promise revived, but doubts persist' (Jan 16), delays in urban local body elections undermine decentralised administration. Statutory timelines for civic polls and enhanced financial autonomy for municipal bodies are essential, aligning with the Supreme Court directives. These steps would foster accountable governance and address Bengaluru's infrastructural challenges systematically.

Anand Jewoor, Kalaburagi

Ensure their dignity

I refer to 'New timelines for a safe delivery' (Jan 16). The life of gig workers remains precarious, with rising accidents and fatalities. Consumers' impatience and employers' harsh deadlines create perilous working conditions. The State must ensure comprehensive safeguards, fair codes, insurance, grievance redressal, and humane timelines. Proposals to push dark stores away from residential areas will worsen their burden.

Albert Smith, Bengaluru

Keep parks open

Apropos 'Parks should not be spaces of exclusion' (Jan 15), the editorial is apt and timely. The order should be revoked immediately in the larger public interest. Parks are funded by taxpayers' money, and decisions on their opening hours should be holistic, not arbitrary and must take cognisance of citizen voices. If security was a concern, staggering watchmen's hours would have addressed it. The administration should sensitise park personnel to treat elderly and vulnerable visitors with courtesy and compassion.

S S Kulkarni, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

The time to react has not yet come. The figures being released are inaccurate. But it's not true that the Shiv Sena (UBT) is far behind, as some are claiming... The figures you are seeing now will change.

Sanjay Raut, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader (On BMC polls)

Never deprive someone of hope; it might be all they have.

H Jackson Brown, Jr

TO BE PRECISE

Venezuela's Machado gifts her Nobel Prize to Trump

IN PERSPECTIVE

Beyond politics: The art of *Dhurandhar*

Tracing the film's mammoth success to its pro-establishment positions undervalues its impressive craft and imagination

HARISH S WANKHEDE

The box office success of mainstream Indian cinema is increasingly dependent upon its grandeur and entertainment quotient, now loosely captured as the 'theatre experience'. Explanations on the massive success of Aditya Dhar's *Dhurandhar* are also on a similar track, where it is argued that the film mostly serves the populist-spectacle narrative, catering to the sensibilities of the general cinemagoer.

Film critics often have this urge to reduce contemporary popular cinema either as works that further political propaganda or *masala* escapism. A deeper examination of these films will, of course, demonstrate that their themes overtly supplement the political values of the governing elites (Dhar's *Uri: The Surgical Strike* endorses the current regime's claims about its anti-Pakistan military actions), propagate patriarchal and conservative ideas (*Kabir Singh*), and utilise a communal rhetoric to villainise the Muslim (*The Kashmir Files* and *The Kerala Story*). However, to reduce the majority of successful films merely as ideological tools or banal entertainers is to ignore the creative artistry that makes this form of cinema consistently resonate with the viewer.

Many critics of *Dhurandhar* fall into similar territory. They question the political instrumentality of the film's narrative that propagates hatred against Pakistan, supplements the hyper-nationalist rhetoric of the dispensation, and distorts facts around sensitive events that are relevant to national security. Such criticism risks reducing the art of cinema to an ideological instrument, utilised by the dominant elites to serve their political and commercial interests. There is merit in this assessment, but the argument that films like *Dhurandhar* shall represent the historic truth in authentic and politically correct ways is fundamentally flawed.

Popular films work on an emotional core, imaginative narrative arcs, and creative autonomy. Films based on real events, especially, cannot be made without these elements. Without the rich infusion of drama (like in *The Legend of Bhagat Singh*), emotional connect (*Gandhi*), or a good musical score (*Razia Sultan*), they could end up as dull docu-fiction.

Mainstream cinema has often engaged with history in its own creative ways. In Hollywood, Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* has used imaginative symbols to create an emotional truth that facts alone cannot convey. Cinema does not have to be based upon raw fact-sheets; it requires emotional scales and relatable characters to create an interesting viewer experience. Tweaking history and creating imaginative subplots have produced hugely entertaining cinema, like Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*.

The classic Hindi film *Mughal-e-Azam* is a fine example, where characters from history are dramatised to build a strong, emotional story. Another example of this style is seen in Anurag Kashyap's *Black Friday*. The film is centred on a gritty police investigation into the 1993 blasts in Mumbai; it showcases real events and people, but uses a fictional subtext. Though the film claims to represent recent history, without the help of fictional bridges and emotional values, retelling such sensitive events would be unwieldy. The film also balances the moral binaries and does not fall into the trap of political correctness.

Biographies such as *Paan Singh Tomar* and *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag* have also utilised imaginative methods to create convincing, entertaining cinema. Do they portray history as absolute or their leading men with all their inherent complexities? These films may not be authentic representations of what really happened with the protagonists, but a certain creative liberty is critical to the overall experience a film delivers. Beyond political correctness, it is the creative impulse that makes these films work.

The aesthetic solace

Dhurandhar shall be judged not only as a populist right-wing political expression, but also as a bold cinematic experiment. The narrative is fictional, but when packaged with a political subtext and a few smartly placed references to real-life events, the film becomes more compelling than the average escapist fare. The film's visual finesse is striking – the audience connects with it not entirely for its right-wing propaganda; it also comes with a good music score, impressive writing, ace performances, and exciting action choreography.

Dhurandhar may fit a larger genre of pro-establishment cinema. However, its stunning commercial success is not dependent upon its political identity alone. It is difficult to divorce cinema from its purpose to serve the dominant social and political ideas. Filmmakers have often utilised cinematic liberties to supplement the ideological values of the powers-that-be. But this exercise becomes even more influential when cinema offers superior aesthetic values, technical competence, and innovative narrative styles, ensuring an emotional connection with the audience.

(The writer is an assistant professor at the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Poison of hate and limits of law

ALOK PRASANNA KUMAR

Karnataka's Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill has the right intent. If free speech is the lifeblood of a democracy, hate speech poisons that lifeblood, pitting community against community, shattering the bonds of fraternity and targeting the dignity of an individual. Hate speech, as generally defined, aims to demean and dehumanise an individual and a community, creating the basis for violence against them. Examples can be found in Nazi rhetoric against Jews, Hutu radio broadcasts against Tutsis, and, closer home, in the dehumanisation of Bengali speakers in erstwhile East Pakistan by the West Pakistani government and media. These were large-scale, state-sponsored, systematic campaigns of hate targeting specific marginalised communities. The age of mass media and now social media has only made it easier for hate speech to spread wider and faster.

Provisions in regular criminal law hope to prevent the spread of hate speech to an extent by punishing perpetrators on an individual basis. What the Karnataka Bill aims to do is fill in the gaps in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) when it comes to tackling hate speech and hate crimes. The BNS, though passed in 2023, still sticks to colonial-era definitions of hate speech, which were more concerned with maintaining peace between communities rather than protecting constitutional values of fraternity or dignity. The inadequacies in this framework have been addressed by the Law Commission of India in its 267th report, but its suggestions remain unimplemented.

Has the Karnataka Bill addressed these deficiencies?

With the sharper definition and a clearer list of protected categories, the Karnataka Bill has, to some extent, addressed some gaps in the BNS. However, it does not address the core of the problem – poor implementation of the law. In a law-abiding country, the investigation and prosecution of crimes are done only on the basis of the law and the individual judgment of the investigator and prosecutor. However, in India, the investigator and prosecutor seldom act with such independence in high-profile cases and take their cues from the political executive. Deciding whom to prosecute and whom to let off has become an exercise in discretion rather than the law.

This matters because the model of preventing hate speech is deterrence through criminal sanctions – a measure which only works if the criminal justice system works predictably and efficiently. Without serious reforms in the criminal justice system (of which prosecutorial independence is one element), merely passing new laws is no deterrence. When the decision to investigate or prosecute is based on partisan political concerns, the words of the law become meaningless. More so, when there is little chance of a remedy against bad-faith prosecutions.

Even if the intent of the law was only to clarify the definition of what constitutes hate speech and how it should be prosecuted, Karnataka's Bill could have just proposed an amendment to the BNS, which has existing provisions to tackle hate speech. However, for reasons best known to it, the state government has chosen to make this a separate offence with a different language, a different procedure for prosecution and a different punishment. This makes the Bill stand in conflict with the Union legislation and raises doubts about its constitutional validity.

That said, there are no simple answers on how to fight hate speech in India. It requires better drafted laws which define the offence narrowly and specifically, and more robust enforcement mechanisms implemented by independent and efficient institutions. These are not changes which can take place overnight. It also requires greater political imagination to fight hate speech, one that goes beyond criminal law and punishment as the only possible tools to fight hate speech.

When existing provisions of law relating to hate speech remain poorly or maliciously implemented, more laws, whether at the national or state level, will fail to address the problem. Removing the poison from the lifeblood of democracy requires stronger treatment than just punitive laws.

(The writer is an advocate and co-founder of the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy. The views expressed here are personal.)

Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill
2025
Dec 4: The draft Bill is approved by the state cabinet
Dec 10: The Bill is introduced in the state legislature
Dec 18: The Bill is passed by the Legislative Council and the Assembly, amid protests by the Opposition
2026
Jan 10: Governor withholds assent, seeking clarifications from the state government.
DH ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN
The Bill at a glance:
Purpose: To prevent hate speech and hate crimes that promote disharmony, hatred, or enmity in society
Hate Speech defined: Public expression – spoken, written, visual, symbolic, or electronic – intended to incite hatred or ill-will
Hate Crimes: Includes publishing, circulating, promoting, inciting, abetting, or attempting hate speech
Punishment:
First offence: 1–7 years' imprisonment, and a fine of up to Rs 50,000
Repeat offence: 2–10 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh
Nature of Offence: Cognizable, non-bailable, triable by Judicial Magistrate First Class
Victim Relief: Courts may award compensation based on harm caused
Preventive Powers: Magistrates and senior police can act to prevent offences
Institutional Liability: Organisations and responsible officials may be prosecuted
Content Control: The State can order the blocking or removal of hate material, including online
Safeguards: Exemptions for bona fide artistic, literary, scientific, heritage, or religious content

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) vs Karnataka Bill

	BNS	Karnataka Bill
Legal Framework	Section 196 of the BNS criminalises the promotion of enmity	The Karnataka Bill is a standalone law against hate speech and hate crimes
Scope of Protection	The BNS covers promotion of enmity between different religious, racial, linguistic and caste groups	The Karnataka Bill also protects people of other genders, and different sexual orientations, persons with disabilities, and deceased.
Punishment:	The BNS provides for 3 years in prison (5 years for offence in religious places)	The Karnataka Bill raises it to 7 years in prison, 10 years for repeat offences
Digital Powers:	The BNS relies on a general procedure	The Karnataka Bill seeks to allow direct state-ordered content takedown
Approach:	The BNS is punitive and based on the need to maintain public order	The Karnataka Bill provides for compensation for victims

Offences Promoting Enmity Between Different Groups have been rising, with NCRB reporting 1104 such crimes in 2021, 1570 in 2022, and 2155 in 2023.

Karnataka: The politics of policing speech

PRATHIMA NANDAKUMAR
DH NEWS SERVICE

The Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, 2025, passed by the Assembly in December and awaiting Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's assent, has sharpened political fault lines in the state, with the BJP accusing the Congress government of attempting to muzzle dissent and control the political narrative, even as the ruling party defends the proposed legislation as a response to rising communal tensions.

The Congress has argued that the BJP, while in power at the Centre, used agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate, Income Tax Department and CBI to intimidate political opponents. The BJP leaders now allege that the Siddaramaiah government is adopting a similar approach in the state and trying to rein in opposition leaders, through legislation and policing, particularly in politically sensitive regions.

BJP state president B Y Vijayendra described the proposed law as an "opposition-hate Bill", alleging systematic targeting of opposition leaders and Hindu activists. "The police department has been turned into a Congress office. The hate speech Bill is being brought to muzzle our voice," he said.

Vijayendra claimed the Congress government had realised that its "guarantee schemes" were no longer sufficient to mask governance failures. "Development has taken a beating, and law and order are in shambles," he said, adding that the BJP would challenge the law in court. He alleged that the definition of hate speech was vague and could be misused to intimidate political opponents ahead of the 2028 elections.

Several BJP leaders suspect the Bill is aimed at controlling the political narrative before the 2028 Assembly polls. The Congress' '40% Sarkar' campaign against the previous Bommai-led BJP government had helped it secure a decisive mandate in 2023, pushing the BJP into opposition.

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, said the Bill criminalised democratic criticism. "It is my constitutional duty to criticise the ruling party when they are wrong. But if the Bill is passed, it will be a crime," he said. "The police have been given absolute power to decide what qualifies as hate speech and can arrest anyone even before an investigation."

The BJP has also drawn parallels with the deployment of the Special Action Force in coastal Karnataka following the July 2022 murder of BJP youth leader Praveen Nettaru in Dakshina Kannada. While the government says the SAF was meant to prevent communal flare-ups, the BJP alleges selective FIRs, externment notices and arrest attempts against Hindu leaders, warning that the hate speech law could be enforced similarly.

Defending the Bill, Home Minister G Parameshwara said hate speech and provocative social media posts had led to violence and disturbed communal harmony. "Unnecessarily, hate speech and provocative posts on social media have led to violence in coastal Karnataka and disturbed communal harmony. A new law will be implemented against those who make hate speech in the coming days," the home minister had assured after SAF formation.

IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge rejected allegations of political motive, saying the Bill was meant to protect public order and noting that the Supreme Court had also expressed concern over hate speech. "Is the Supreme Court also anti-BJP?" he asked.

As the Bill awaits the Governor's decision, its political consequences are expected to hinge on its implementation, with the BJP preparing a legal challenge and the Congress insisting the law is necessary to prevent violence and preserve public order.

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Climate change leads to human-bear clash in Himalayas

Low snowfall and availability of foodsources such as farmlands and garbage dumps have pushed bears out of hibernation, writes Raju Gusain

On New Year's Day, Kesar Singh of Khunana village in Chamoli district in Uttarakhand, who sustained grievous injuries in a bear attack, was airlifted to All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh, for medical treatment.

On the night of December 31, two people returning home on Shyampur Haat Road in Rishikesh faced a life-threatening situation when a bear chased them through their colony street. The incident was captured on CCTV, and the video later went viral.

However, the most alarming situation was reported from Malla village in the Bhatwari block of Uttarkashi district, where three bears entered a villager's premises almost every night. After their presence was recorded on CCTV footage, forest officials installed a cage. One bear was trapped and subsequently shifted.

The alarming rise in bear attacks has become a major concern for the Uttarakhand government. Last year alone, a record eight people lost their lives, while 106 others were injured in bear attacks across various parts of the hill state. Over the past 25 years, 73 people have been killed and 2,048 others injured in bear attacks.

Experts link the growing human–animal conflict to climate change. Reduced snowfall has disrupted the natural hibernation cycle of bears. The situation turned particularly serious in Gopeshwar last month when a bear attacked two school students. In another incident at Pokhri (Chamoli), a bear attacked a student, dragging him toward the forest, but another student raised an alarm, prompting the bear to retreat. Due to increasing incidents of human–wildlife conflict, school timings were changed in the Rudraprayag district.

The Wildlife Institute of India (WII), an autonomous research body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, has conducted studies on bears in Jammu and Kashmir. Their findings indicate a decline in the duration of bear hibernation. Dr Satya Kumar, a scientist at WII, says, "The drivers of man-bear conflicts are habitat loss, habitat degradation, competition between man and bear for forest resources, food grown by man and garbage dumps."

Tranquilising a bear at a garbage dump in Chamoli. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Garbage dumps, in particular, have emerged as a major attractant for bears. Bears are frequently spotted near a garbage dump close to the army area in Joshimath (Chamoli). In 2018, a bear entered an army campus and mauled an officer, who was later airlifted to a military hospital in Delhi.

Explaining the impact of climate change on bear behaviour, Dr Kumar adds, "The attack has some link with climate change as bears living in higher elevations of the Himalaya go on hibernation when they face food scarcity, heavy snowfall and harsh weather conditions in their habitats. If snowfall is low and anthropogenic food sources such as farmland and garbage are available, the hibernation period will be affected as well. Our study in J&K states that the average duration of hibernation of the Asiatic black bear was about 60 days; earlier, it was more."

According to the Uttarakhand Forest Department's last census in 2008, the state is home to 1,935 Asiatic black bears, 14 brown bears, and 112 sloth bears. No recent census data is available. Despite this, bear attacks continue to cause significant loss to human life and livestock. Hunter and wildlife observer Joy Hukil says, "Bear attacks on women collecting fodder in forests were common earlier. But bears attacking students and entering school campuses is something new. This situation requires a comprehensive and scientific study."

Historical records show that bear attacks were also common during the British period in India. Data indicates that 84 people were killed by bears in 1875, 123 in 1876, 85 in 1877, 94 in 1878, 121 in 1879, and 108 in 1880. At that time, shooting 'problem bears' was considered the only solution, and 7,508 bears were killed between 1875 and 1880 by launching special operations in India.

Taking human–wildlife conflict seriously, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has announced several measures to address the challenge. These include installing solar fencing and sensor-based alert systems, as well as setting up modern wildlife sterilisation and rehabilitation centres across districts. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said, "Rescue and rehabilitation centres for identified wild animals in human-wildlife conflict will be opened in all districts of the state. For this, a minimum of 10 Nali in hilly forest areas and a minimum of 1 acre of land in plain forest areas will be reserved."

Though the New Year has started, in Tripalisain in district Pauri, over eight villages are reeling under the old problem-bear menace. The life of local people have been affected for the past four months. They have lost over 50 livestock in bear attacks. No human loss has been reported from the affected area so far. They don't know when life will turn normal for them.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pollens hide keys to India's climatic history

Ancient pollens hidden beneath a lake in Chhattisgarh have helped unearth 3,000 years of India's climatic history and the summer monsoon's changing pattern in the core monsoon zone — a discovery that may provide more clues on how the monsoon will behave in the future.

Scientists at Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences, Lucknow, have found evidence of unusually strong Indian summer monsoon in lake sediment pollen records preserved in the Raja Rani Lake in Korba district, right in the heart of India's core monsoon zone. Using an unusual technique, they extracted a 40-centimetre-long sediment core. The mud records revealed environmental changes, as indicated by microscopic pollen grains shed by plants that once grew around the lake.

By identifying and counting these pollen grains, a science known as palynology, the researchers reconstructed past vegetation and, in turn, past climate. Forest-loving plants indicated warm, humid conditions, while grasses and herbs suggested drier phases.

"We chose the lake because there was no mixing of the sediments due to minimal human influence, as we are looking for lake sediments in forested areas. The sediment chronology was determined by accelerator mass spectrometry. We also did carbon dating of a part of the core," BISP scientist Mohammad Firoze Quamar, corresponding author of the paper, told *DH*.

Quamar and his team found that the savannah vegetation between 1610-910 BCE first transformed into wooded grassland and subsequently into forest, as the area first experienced low rainfall and then increased and intensified rainfall.

They also found the signature of a global weather event known as the medieval climate anomaly (MCA). The pollen record showed a clear dominance of moist and dry tropical deciduous forest species, indicating strong monsoon rainfall and a warm, humid climate in central India. Crucially, the study found no evidence of contrasting dry conditions within the core monsoon zone during this period.

The scientists traced this strong monsoon to a global warm phase known as the MCA, roughly between 1,060 and 1,725 CE. The study attributes the enhanced monsoon to a combination of global and regional factors, including La Niña–like conditions, which are typically associated with stronger Indian monsoons.

According to the scientists, understanding monsoon behaviour and Holocene climate change variability would help strengthen current understanding of present climatic conditions and possible future trends. Also, the high-resolution palaeoclimatic records generated in the study could help develop paleoclimatic models to simulate future climatic trends and rainfall patterns. The study has appeared in the Review of Palaeobotany and Palynology.

- Kalyan Ray

No illegality in LS Speaker forming panel for probe against Justice Varma: SC

Says petitioner judge not entitled to relief under Article 32 of Constitution

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea of Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma challenging the validity of the Lok Sabha Speaker's decision to form a panel to probe charges of "misbehaviour" against him, in connection with the alleged recovery of cash at his official Delhi residence during a fire incident on March 14, 2025.

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma held that "the Speaker committed no illegality in constituting the committee", which comprises apex court judge Aravind Kumar, Madras HC Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava and senior advocate from Karnataka B V Acharya.

Holding that the petitioner judge was not entitled to any relief, the bench said the extraordinary remedy under Article 32 of the Constitution sought by Justice Varma, which gives the right to petition the SC directly, is confined to enforcement of fundamental rights and does not extend to issuing advisory in relation to internal statutory mechanisms of Parliament, where no present or inevitable infraction of any fundamental right is evinced.

Justice Yashwant Varma

In its 60-page judgment on the writ petition filed by Justice Varma, the court, however, found that the draft decision prepared by the Secretary-General of the Rajya Sabha, which recorded that the notice of motion given to the Chairman was not "in order", did not "align with the procedure contemplated under law".

"The Secretary General's role was expected to remain confined to administrative scrutiny, such as verification of procedural compliance, and could not extend to assuming a quasi-adjudicatory function," the bench said.

In its observations, the bench said: "We do hope that no other judge faces proceedings for his removal from service on allegations of misbehaviour. Should, at all, there be an unfortunate recurrence... and the representatives of the people of the nation demand an investigation... it would be just and proper if Secretariat exercises restraint and leaves it to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha or the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, as the case may be, to decide the question of admission of a motion instead of concluding as to what should be the future course of action."

Proposed seed bill to protect interest of farmers: Chouhan

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Dismissing apprehension over draft Seeds Bill 2025, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday said that it protects farmers' rights to grow, sow, save, exchange and sell farm-saved seeds.

"There is a misconception being spread that this will affect traditional seeds. That's not true," he told reporters here.

Through this bill, the government introduced stringent penalties for production and sale of illegal seeds, he said.

He said proposed fines up to Rs 30 lakh to curb illegal seed production, a significant increase from the current Rs 500 penalty under the 1966 Seeds Act.

Chouhan also clarified that the bill's provisions are not applicable to farmers and farmer varieties, including traditional varieties.

"Farmers can sow their own seeds. Farmers can give seeds to other farmers," he said, adding that the traditional system, where farmers borrow seeds at planting time and return one and a quarter times the amount later, will continue without disruption. For seeds sold by companies, the bill introduces traceability measures

SC stays Bengal BJP MLA Mukul Roy's disqualification

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday stayed a Calcutta High Court order that disqualified senior Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Mukul Roy as an MLA of the West Bengal Assembly under the anti-defection law.

Mukul Roy

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi put on hold the November 13, 2025.

The counsel for the petitioner contended that the HC exceeded its jurisdiction by ordering the disqualification in the exercise of its narrow judicial review powers.

It was contended that the Speaker declined to entertain the plea on the ground that social media posts submitted to show Roy's alleged defection were not authenticated in terms of Section 65B of the Evidence Act. However, the HC observed that strict adherence to Section 65B was not necessary in proceedings under the 10th schedule of the Constitution.

The HC, on November 13, 2025, had disqualified Roy under the anti-defection law.

Roy was elected as a MLA on a BJP ticket from the Krishnanagar Uttar seat in May 2021, but joined the ruling TMC in June that year, while retaining his MLA status.

The counsel stated, "The Speaker's findings were that in the absence of anything to corroborate those screenshots, they could not be taken as evidence. The Speaker mentioned that despite several opportunities, there was no oral evidence, and therefore, the benefit of doubt had to be given to the elected member."

Another counsel, representing BJP leaders, contended that there was a presser, and Roy went to event, where TMC authorities were present.

India home to world's second largest diabetes population in 2024: Study

NEW DELHI, PTI: At 90 million, India ranked second in the number of adults living with diabetes in 2024. China was first at 148 million and the US ranked third at 39 million, according to a study published in The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology journal.

Researchers, including those from the International Diabetes Federation in Belgium and the India Diabetes Research Foundation and Dr A Ramachandran's Diabetes Hospital in Chennai, said countries with large populations, such as China, India, the US, and Pakistan, contribute a very large share of the number of people with diabetes worldwide.

They projected that Pakistan could surpass the US by 2050.

The eleventh edition of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Diabetes Atlas provides national, regional and global diabetes prevalence estimates for 2024, with projections to 2050.

Estimates were provided for 215 countries and territories after analysing 246 studies conducted between 2005 and 2024.

Over 11% of the world's adult population, or 589 million adults aged 20-79, were affected by the metabolic disorder in 2024 and nearly 13% (853 million adults) are projected to be affected by 2050, the study said.

"In 2024, one in nine adults worldwide was living with diabetes. The number of adults with diabetes in 2024 exceeded 500 million and is projected to rise to close to 900 million by 2050," the authors wrote.

"In 2024, the largest number of adults with diabetes aged 20-79 years was in China (148 million), followed by India (90 million), and the US (39 million)," they said.

Over four-fifths of the world's diabetes population, or 80.64%, were estimated to be living in low and middle-income countries in 2024. The countries could also be expected to see more than 95% of the global increase in cases by 2050.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

I CAN'T BELIEVE BUMSTEAD'S FOOTBALL POOL HAS SPREAD TO THE OTHER OFFICES IN THE BUILDING
ARE YOU THINKING OF STOPPING IT, SIR?
NO, I'M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW I CAN TURN THIS INTO A WAY TO MAKE ME MONEY
I'M IN, DAG!
I'M TAKING THE 8-POINT SPREAD
WISH I HAD A NICE BOSS LIKE DAG'S

Hagar The Horrible

WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR YOU TO GO AWAY?!
TWO THINGS! YOU'RE GOING TO THROW DOWN GOLD FOR ME AND MY CREW...
AND YOU'RE GOING TO BUY ALL MY SON'S CHOCOLATE BARS SO HE CAN TAKE A CLASS TRIP!

Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

Marvin

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CRTTA

RNCKA

LPYLEU

ASCWEH

Wow! These are beautiful! I can see right through them.
They radiate positive energy.
7/9
MANY PEOPLE LOVE QUARTZ, AND THE REASON IS ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: NUTTY SHIFT BUNKER HYBRID
Answer: Using a jackhammer to bore holes into the granite was working until it — BIT THE DUST

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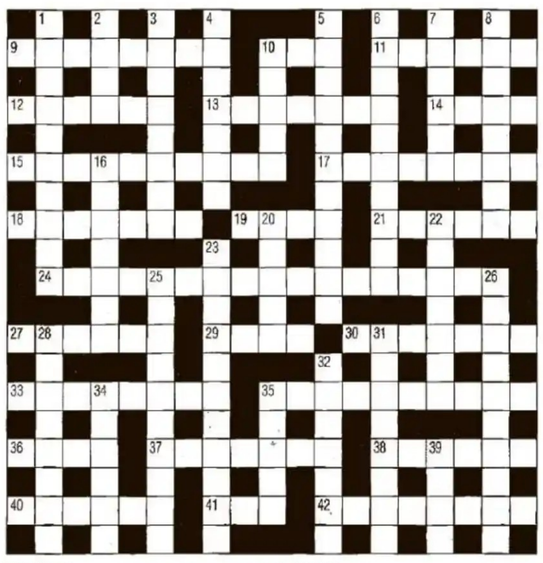
CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 4023



ACROSS
9 Exhausted, informally (4,4)
10 Tin (3)
11 Production (6)
12 Road (6)
13 Remaining part (7)
14 Untruths (4)
15 Continent (10)
17 Enormous (8)
18 Antagonistic (7)
19 Celebrity (4)
21 Revenue (6)
24 Women's sixth sense? (8,9)
27 Young cat (6)
29 Border (4)
30 Convent (7)
33 Vegetable (8)
35 Dramatist (10)
36 Broad smile (4)
37 Breed of dog (7)
38 London station (6)
40 Cotton fabric (6)
41 Plaything (3)
42 Frog larvae (8)

DOWN
1 Beginning a journey (7,3)
2 Lazy (4)
3 Upright (8)
4 Type of drug (7)
5 Imprison (11)
6 Type of pasta (10)
7 Gramophone 'needle' (6)
8 Tepid (8)
10 Punctuation mark (5)
16 Try (7)
20 Article (5)
22 Italian wine (7)
23 Doubt (11)
25 Idiot (10)
26 Asian country (5,5)
28 Cold dessert (3,5)
31 Cumbersome (8)
32 Recount (7)
34 Sport (6)
35 Glazier's paste (5)
39 Presently (4)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
9 Very quickly train to skate on ice (2,1,5)
10 Understand, you say, in the main (3)
11 Is it for cutting deadwood? (6)
12 Name the vessel – an Oriental vessel (6)
13 There's sun and it's nice out again – honest (7)
14 Wind that makes you lose your footing (4)
15 The hardness is a source of worry (10)
17 Reckoning it's not part of the original building (8)
18 Carried away again, emotionally touched by (7)
19 It would be advisable to have water (4)
21 Said the old location does arouse strong feelings (6)
24 Took some exercise that made one taller? (9,4,4)
27 Manage to pronounce the composer's name (6)
29 Cries – and with reason, you say (4)
30 Show the lady is playing the piano in (7)
33 Look the flies out that contain the pattern (4,4)
35 Dressing in for skating? (8,2)
36 The plant is in perfect condition (4)
37 Say you'll keep it (7)
38 Cry "Go away!" when the key is inserted (6)
40 "What makes one room two rooms?" is the riddle (6)
41 The animals, we're told, take advantage of it (3)
42 Be inclined to rely on foolishly and lovingly (8)

DOWN
1 Anxiety felt about '15' (10)
2 Walk from the stage (4)
3 The top pub in the place has been renovated (8)
4 Will be awfully salty and horrible (7)
5 Being rude to, at the christening? (4-7)
6 With only strangers about, is the day interminable? (10)
7 State of mind brought about by drink? (6)
8 Pretends one just scrapes along (5,3)
10 "Cheerful" is fair (5)
16 Trapped again by the water, not knowing what to do (7)
20 Give the prearranged nod and we hold up (5)
22 Mark down each damaged ballpoint (7)
23 When the egg has hatched, gets frightened (8,3)
25 Deals with the topic only indirectly, yet convinces one (5,5)
26 Could be improved taste-wise, but it's right for the weather (10)
28 Figure a hat-pin might hold it in an emergency (2,1,5)
31 Laying it on and being dignified (8)
32 Manages, when one provides the guidance (7)
34 Awful nonsense – catch up! (6)
35 What the draper christened his boy? (5)
39 Herbivores raised on grass (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12333

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Froth 6, S-O-uth 9, Ro-using 10, Snoop 11, A-L-arm 12, Agape 13, De-bacle 15, Fib 17, Iron 18, Beg-one 19, Saved 20, Chum-PS 22, Fifi 24, His 25, Balloon 26, Tr-O-on 27, Float 28, WElly 29, Pacific 30, Green 31, Teddy
DOWN: 2, Ringer 3, Trojan 4, Hop 5, U-sage 6, Snapped 7, O-gle 8, Tur-pi-n 12, Alias 13, Ditch 14, B-on-us 15, Folio 16, Bevin 18, Bevan 19, Sp-art-an 21, Hit-le-R 22, Fleece 23, Foul-Ed 25, Bowi. e. 26, Tape 28, W-it

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Capri 6, Sound 9, Acceded 10, Scone 11, Venus 12, Urges 13, Soloist 15, Ohm 17, Prim 18, Palate 19, Feral 20, Repair 22, Diva 24, Try 25, Refusal 26, Drool 27, Taboo 28, Scold 29, Gumshoe 30, Hades 31, Stash
DOWN: 2, Anchor 3, Random 4, Ice 5, Heart 6, Several 7, Odes 8, Nought 12, Usher 13, Sport 14, Lippy 15, Oasis 16, Medal 18, Panel 19, Fibrous 21, Errata 22, Dulcet 23, Vaults 25, Rouse 26, Doge 28, SOS

◆SU-DO-KU-6806◆

4		8					6	
			5	2			8	
					6	3		7
			7	9				1
7	8						5	4
2				4	5			
6		4	2					
	2			7	8			
	3					1		2

hard

SOLUTION TO 6805

3	7	8	4	2	6	1	9	5
5	2	9	7	8	1	6	3	4
6	1	4	3	5	9	7	8	2
9	8	6	2	1	3	4	5	7
7	3	2	9	4	5	8	1	6
4	5	1	8	6	7	9	2	3
1	4	5	6	9	2	3	7	8
8	9	7	5	3	4	2	6	1
2	6	3	1	7	8	5	4	9

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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S1 A1 O1 O1 T1 C3 R1 — Double Word Score — RACK 1
H4 L1 S1 S1 D2 E1 U1 — RACK 2
A1 G2 U1 H4 Q10 G2 O1 — Triple Word Score — RACK 3
E1 D2 L1 I1 I1 O1 K5 — Double Word Score — RACK 4
N1 N1 R1 D2 E1 I1 G2 — RACK 5

PAR SCORE 140-150
by JUDD
FIVE RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

H4 A1 T1 C3 H4 E1 T1 — RACK 1 = 95
A1 L1 E1 X8 I1 A1 — RACK 2 = 13
A1 U1 T1 O1 M3 A1 T1 — RACK 3 = 68
A1 P3 P3 L1 I1 E1 R1 — RACK 4 = 67
PAR SCORE 160-170 — JUDD'S TOTAL 243

HITORI-3260

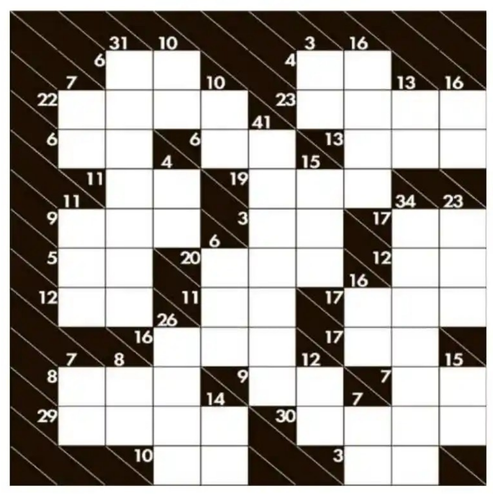
4	7	4	1	2	6	5	5
1	3	8	5	6	1	6	2
5	5	6	2	1	6	4	3
6	4	3	5	5	2	8	5
1	2	5	1	4	5	6	8
3	6	1	7	5	4	2	5
1	1	4	5	8	5	3	7
6	8	2	6	1	5	1	5

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

SOLUTION TO 3259

5	1	8	■	2	4	7	3
■	4	■	1	■	2	3	■
3	2	1	6	4	5	■	8
■	8	■	4	■	1	6	5
1	■	6	■	5	7	4	■
2	3	7	5	6	8	■	1
7	■	4	2	3	■	1	6
4	5	■	3	1	6	8	■

KAKURO- 3260



SOLUTION TO 3259

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3799

2					9			3
	4	3					■	
		7		8		■	4	
4	7	1	9	2	■			
			7	■				
			■		■			
	2	6				■		
	5			6			■	
■					1		3	■

SOLUTION TO 3798

5	6	4	9	2	7	1	3	8
2	1	7	6	3	8	9	4	5
8	9	3	5	4	1	6	7	2
9	7	2	4	6	5	3	8	1
3	8	6	1	7	9	2	5	4
4	5	1	3	8	2	7	6	9
7	4	9	2	5	6	8	1	3
6	2	5	8	1	3	4	9	7
1	3	8	7	9	4	5	2	6

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Massive protests in Bengal over migrant's death in Jharkhand

KOLKATA, PTI

A wave of violent protests over the death of a migrant worker in Jharkhand brought parts of West Bengal's Murshidabad district to a standstill on Friday, as angry locals blocked railway tracks and National Highway-12 for hours, leaving thousands of passengers stranded and disrupting vehicular movement on the arterial road, police said.

Tensions flared as sections of the mob vandalised a traffic kiosk and damaged a police vehicle during clashes with the police. Brickbatting left at least 12 people injured, several of them media personnel.

A woman journalist from a Bengali news channel was allegedly assaulted by unruly protesters while covering the agitation, drawing sharp condemnation from media bodies.

The flashpoint was the death of 36-year-old Alauddin Sheikh, a resident of the Sujapur Kumarpur gram panchayat area of Beldanga in the minority-dominated Murshidabad district, whose body was recovered from his rented accommodation in Jharkhand, where he worked as a scrap dealer.

Family members and villagers alleged that he was beaten to death and later hung to make it appear like suicide, triggering widespread outrage after his body was brought to the village on Friday morning.

From around 9 am, hundreds of protesters squatted on the Sealdah-Lalgola railway line at Maheshpur, placing bamboo poles on the tracks, while others blocked NH-12 by burning tyres, effectively snapping rail and road connectivity between north and south Bengal.

Several local and long-distance trains were halted, and hundreds of buses and trucks remained stranded on the highway. "The situation became volatile as emotions ran high. Protesters were demanding immediate arrests of the culprits," a senior police officer said.

X, Grok hit by major global outage

NEW DELHI, PTI: Microblogging platform X, and its integrated AI chatbot Grok, on Friday faced a major technical snag as thousands of users globally, including in India, reported that the service was down.

According to outage tracking website Downdetector, reports of the platform being inaccessible began spiking around 8:40 pm IST, with users across various geographies reporting issues with both the mobile application and the website.

Govt blocks 242 illegal betting and gaming websites

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The government on Friday said it has blocked 242 illegal betting and gaming websites and their links.

With this, a total of 7,800 illegal betting and gambling websites have been blocked since the gaming ban took effect in August last year, sources in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology said.

Sources said the action reflects the government's commitment to protect users, especially youth, and to curb financial and social harm caused by illegal online betting and gambling platforms. The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, passed by Parliament and promulgated into law in August 2025, bans any form of real-money gaming (RMG) and its advertisements in India.

The law has a provision to impose jail terms of up to three years and a fine of Rs 1 crore or both if anyone offers real-money gaming.

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
SIGNALING WORKS

CORRIGENDUM NO. 01/25-26 TO TENDER NO.: SUR-NC-CR-SNT-C-S-02-2026, Dated 11.01.2026. Name of work: Supply, Installation, Testing & commissioning of Indoor & Outdoor equipment's in connection with provision of electronic interlocking at 3 stations between Osmanabad to Tuljapur Alteration work in RRI at Osmanabad & Outdoor signaling works at 04 stations between Osmanabad to Tuljapur in connection with Solapur - Osmanabad new BG line in Solapur Division of Central Railway. The details of the above-mentioned Corrigendum Tender Notice have been published on the website **www.ireps.gov.in** on **14.01.2026** in connection with the aforesaid work. Tenderers are advised to note the above changes. All other terms and conditions remain un-changed.

Asst. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer (Construction), Central Railway, Solapur

AK/Sur-10

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JHARIA REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DHANBAD

e-Procurement Notice
Tender Reference No: JRDA/CIVIL/25-26/36/02
Date: 01.01.2026

1.	Name of Work	**Upgradation of Phase-I of Visthapit Awas at Belgaria, Dhanbad. (2nd Call)**
2.	Estimated Cost	Rs. 47,85,22,760.00
3.	EMD	Rs. 47,85,300.00
4.	Tender Document Cost	Rs.10,000.00
5.	Time of Completion	18 months
6.	Date/Time from which bid is available for online bidding	06.01.2026 at 03:00 PM
7.	Last Date/Time for on-line submission of bids	27.01.2026 at 5:00 PM
8.	Date and Time of Bid Opening	29.01.2026 at 11:30 AM
9.	Name and Address of Officer inviting tender	Head of Department (Civil), JRDA, Dhanbad Hatia More, Golf Ground Road, Hirapur, Dhanbad - 826001 Jharkhand, India Email: infojrda.dhn@gmail.com

Note : 1. Only e-tenders will be accepted.
2. Further details can be seen on website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Sd/-
Head of Department (Civil), JRDA, Dhanbad,

PR 370854 (Rural Development)25-26*D

National Innovation Foundation - India
Autonomous Institute of Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India
Grambharti, Amrapur, Mahudi Road Gandhinagar, Gujarat-382650
Tel: 02764 261134/ 35/ 36/ 37/ 38 ; Web. www.nif.org.in

Advt. No. 01/2026

National Innovation Foundation - India (NIF) invites online applications from highly motivated and eligible professionals for engagement at various levels (Managers, Associates, Fellows).

The engagement is purely on temporary and contractual basis. The detailed advertisement is available at **https://nif.org.in/careers.** The last date for submission of online form is 10th February 2026.

CBC 36118/12/0002/2526 **Sd/- Director**

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-21,22 and 23 Dt. 14.01.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager/Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai - 3, invites online tender from the experienced Contractors for the following works for further details, please refer to **www.ireps.gov.in**

Sl. No.	Tender No./Name of the work	Value(Rs.)	Closing date/time
1.	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-21** Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with improvements to PEI Ballast depot in MS-VM Section of Chennai division.	11924429.26	04.02.2026 (15.00 hrs.)
2.	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-22** Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with Development of Ballast Depot for increasing the ballast capacity at DVR in MAS GDR section of Chennai Division.	9612632.44	04.02.2026 (15.00 hrs.)
3.	**Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-23** Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with Realignment of curves with 2/3rd transition length for providing full transition length for 130 kmph in Chennai Division.	23852651.85	04.02.2026 (15.00 hrs.)

Sr.Divisional Electrical Engineer/ Traction Distribution/MAS

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway for the following work : **Name of work:** Construction of (G+2) RPF Barrack at Noapara of Metro Railway, Kolkata. **Approx Cost of Work :** ₹ 4,51,32,387.55, **Earnest Money:** ₹ 3,75,700.00, **Completion Period :** Twelve (12) Months, **Date and Time of Closing:** 10.02.2026 at 12.00 Hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website : **www.ireps.gov.in Amendments/Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.**

Abridge e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2541-2025 (Open)

Follow us at: /metrorailwaykol /metrorailkolkata

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Tender Notice No.: e-Tender/2026/01/1, Date: 14.01.2026. For and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur-721301 invites e-tenders for the following works **before 15.00 hrs.** on the date mentioned against items and will be **opened at 15.30 hrs. Sl.No.**-1. **Tender No.: E-KGPW-DEN-01-2026. Description of work:** Upgradation of infrastructure facilities of Carriage Shops for maintenance of coaching stock under the jurisdiction of ADEN/WSP/Kharagpur. **Tender Value:** ₹ 7,31,98,292.29. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 5,16,000. **Completion Period of the work:** 18 months. **Sl.No.**-2. **Tender No.: E-KGPW-DEN-02-2026. Description of work:** Augmentation of capacity of CTRB section and up-gradation of associated infrastructure facilities for maintenance of wagons at Wagon repair shop, Kharagpur workshop under the jurisdiction of ADEN/WSP/Kharagpur. **Tender Value:** ₹ 4,94,17,216.32. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 3,97,100. **Completion Period of the work:** 12 months. **Tender Document Cost:** ₹ 0 (for Sl.No. 1 & 2). **Date of Opening:** 12.02.2026 (for Sl.No. 1 & 2). **Bidding start date:** From 29.01.2026 and up to 15.00 hrs. on 12.02.2026 (for Sl.No. 1 & 2). Interested tenderers may visit website **www.ireps.gov.in** for full details/ descriptions/specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tender for these works will be accepted. **N.B.:** Prospective bidders may regularly visit **www.ireps.gov.in** to participate in all tenders. **(PR-1068)**

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
ENGINEERING WORK

E-Tender Notice No: 02-2026-SrDENCo. DRM (W)'s, Central Railway, Solapur on behalf of the president of India Invites E-tender from the reputed firms/Contractor for the following work. **Name of work**: 1) Provision of Stabling and supporting work like Portal, Shotcreting, Rock Bolting etc. at critical locations inside Tunnel No.2 In KWV-LUR section in Solapur Division. 2) Rebuilding of 11 Bridges (Slab: 06, RCC Pipe: 03, Arch Br.: 02) and Extension of 06 Bridges (Arches: 05, Box: 01) In Mohol-Wadi Section. **Approximate cost of work**: ₹ 22,66,62,999.56/-. **Earnest Money**: ₹12,83,300.00/-. **Completion period of the work**: 18(Eighteen) Months. **Maintenance Period**: 48(Forty Eight) Months. **Cost of Tender form**: Nil. **Date and time for submission for tender on www.ireps.gov.in website: 06.02.2026**, up to **15:00 hrs**. **Date and time of opening of tender on www.ireps.gov.in 06/02/2026 after 15.30 hrs. Note** : The Prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any change/corrigendum issued for this tender website: **www.ireps.gov.in**

Divisional Railway Manager (Works), CR, Solapur

Akar/Sur-8

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BENGALURU AIRPORT CITY LIMITED

Name and Address of the entity seeking Proposal:
BENGALURU AIRPORT CITY LIMITED
Administration Block,
Kempe Gowda International Airport, Bengaluru - 560 300
Web: www.bengaluruairport.com

NOTICE TO EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

S.No.	Tender Title	Short description of Scope of Work
1	EOI for "Design & Build of Flexi Office Space at Business Park 02- 01 (First Floor) and Board Room Interiors in Urban Forest"	**Brief Scope of Work:** End-to-end Interiors **Design & Build services,** including space planning, MEP coordination, fit-out works, modular furniture supply and installation, MEP & fire systems execution, testing, commissioning, and final handover of a ready-to-use flexi office space and Meeting Space in Urban Forest ➢ **Design & Planning** • Space planning and test fits for high seat density • Concept design aligned to budget benchmarks • Interior design development (2D layouts & 3D views) • Finish, material, and modular system selection • Value engineering and cost optimization ➢ **Engineering & Documentation** • Integrated coordination of HVAC, Electrical, ELV, Plumbing & Fire Fighting • Good for Construction (GFC) / Issued for Construction (IFC) drawings • BOQs with specifications • Statutory & Local authority coordination, if applicable ➢ **Execution & Handover** • Civil & interior works • MEP & Fire systems execution • Modular workstations & loose furniture supply • Branding, graphics & wayfinding • Testing, commissioning, snag rectification • As-built drawings and final handover

Pre Qualification Criteria & other Information: Available on BIAL website (Tenders (bengaluruairport.com)). Reference No: **BACL/EOI/3629**
Submission Due Date & Time for all the above: 29th January 2026
Note: Any further Addendums to this EOI shall be made available in BIAL website.
Applicants who are interested with minimum 10 years of experience in corporate / flexi office interiors and proven turnkey project delivery capability may apply shall express their interest through E–Mail: ramesh.hegde@bialairport.com or register and login to BIAL E-Tendring website (https://www.bialtenders.com) Event ID: 3629
Name and address of the entity seeking RFP:
Head – Procurement & Contracts
Mr. Anil Kumar Patil
Bengaluru Airport City Limited.
Kempegowda International Airport,
Devanahalli, Bengaluru - 560 300
Email for communication: **ramesh.hegde@bialairport.com**
Phone No: 080 – 6678 2203 / 9538882203
www.bengaluruairport.com

GREATER BENGALURU AUTHORITY
Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests, GBA, Annex-03 Building, N.R. Square, Bengaluru.

No. DCF/PR-541/2025-26 Date: 16-01-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the Citizens of Bengaluru that the Head, Civil Engineering Section, Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Government of India, II Block, Koramangala, Bengaluru has submitted an application and requested the undersigned for **removal of 61 trees standing at their Koramangala Campus, Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Koramangala, Bengaluru for Construction of proposed Multistoried Laboratory Building.**

Total No. of trees standing in the project : **61 Nos.**

Description of trees, species, location, area, etc. uploaded in the website of GBA for information of all **(www.bbmp.gov.in).**

Public can send their comments either by Email/Post/hand to; **(a) The Deputy Conservator of Forests & Tree Officer, GBA, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-02. Email: dcfbbmp12@gmail.com (b) The Head, Civil Engineering Section, Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Government of India, II Block, Koramangala, Bengaluru Email: mramaswamy@iiap.res.in** Comments communicated directly to Head, Civil Engineering Section, Indian Institute of Astrophysics should also be marked a copy to the Tree Officer/DCF, GBA.

Deadline for filing objections: Ten (10 days) from the date of publication of this notification in Newspaper. (Objections/comments/ suggestions should be relevant and specific to the project).

In view of the above, the suggestions/objections/comments are invited from citizens under Section 8(3) (vii) of the Karnataka Preservation of Trees Act, 1976.

Sd/- Tree Officer & Deputy Conservator of Forests, GBA, Bengaluru

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Water Resource Department
(Minor Irrigation)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water Development Division, Admin Block, NH-75 Road, Near Café Coffee Day, Narsapura-563133, Kolar taluk & District. E-Mail: eemidklr@rediffmail.com, eemigwddkolar@gmail.com, Landline No: 08152-200049

No:EE/MI/Kol/TA/AE/Tender Notification/2334/2025-26/ Dtd:13.01.2026

Short term tender notification no: 24/2025-26 / Dtd:13.01.2026

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water Development Division, Kolar has invited tenders for eligible bidders through KPP-Procurement for the work in two cover system for the 04 number of works. The tender procedure as per Rule of KTPP Act and standard tender document KW-3 (04 work) shall be followed for Maximum & Minimum amount of Rs. 100.00 Lakhs under the HOA SCP & TSP. Scheduled EMD amount to be submitted through KPP-Portal and tender processing fees as per KPP-Portal procedure. Downloading tender documents through KPP-Portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** starts **from Dt:14.01.2026 12:30 PM**. Uploading tender documents **upto Dt:22.01.2026 12:30 PM.** Opening of technical bid **Dt:23.01.2026 @ 12:30 PM.** The Executive Engineer reserves the right to make any changes in above details in future if needed. For more details can be obtained from the office of the under signed on all working days during office hours and also through **website: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Executive Engineer reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without giving any reason.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water, Development Division, Kolar.

DIPR/KOLAR/RO:449/KSMCA/2025-26

KARNATAKA STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD, PRINTING PRESS
SRI R.B.MAMALE DESAI SMARAK BHAVAN, BHAIRIDEVAR KOPPA, HUBALLI-25 E-mail: gmpp@rediffmail.com, ksamb@rediffmail.com :(0836) 2375078/ 2373726

No: KSAMB/ KP / ACS/ /1673 / 2025-26 DATE: 14.01.2026

e-tender cum e-auction notification

Karnataka State Agricultural Marketing Board's PRITNTING PRESS is inviting Expression of interest in e-procurement portal throug e-tender cum e-auction The detailed information can be obtained from http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal vide Indent APMC/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_6 or can contact concerned officer (9036484002) on working days at office hours. The last date for participation : Date : **28.01.2026**.

Sd/- (VENKATESH G.K)
DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER, PRINTING PRESS, HUBBALLI

DIPR/Dharwad/KSMCA/1107/2025-26

Public Works Department,
Office of the Executive Engineer,
PWD Bengaluru Division, 2nd Floor,
PWD Annexure Building, K.R.Circle, Bengaluru-560001
Ph: **080-22133370,** website: **www.kpwd.karnataka.gov.in**

Short Tender Notification No. 49/2025-26 Date: 14.01.2026

Item-rate tenders, for the work in PWD, **Devanahalli, Hoskote, Nelamangala, Doddaballapura, North, South & Anekal Sub Division** under this office noted below, are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka in accordance with Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 2000 and as per Standard Tender Documents for procurement of works from the contractors registered in K.P.W.D. as per KPPP.

Tender Notification is Published for **08 works (Rs. 15.68 Lakhs to Rs. 400.00 Lakhs).** Details of the tender works can be obtained from the above Office during office hours on working days. **EMD & Tender processing fees are mentioned in KPP Portal.**

1. Tenders must be submitted online through KPP Portal **on or before 4.00 PM on 22.01.2026.**
2. The opening of tenders through KPP Portal **on 23.01.2026 at 4.30 PM** or further date and time will be intimated.

For more details contact this office.

DIPR/DD-CP/5049/KSMCA/2025-26 **Sd/- Executive Engineer**

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KNNL, HBC Division, Athani - 591304. Taluk: Athani, Dist: Belagam.

No: KNNL/HBC/PB/TND/2025-26/3548 Date: 14-01-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

Percentage Tenders are invited as per **KW-4 in Two Cover System** for below mentioned Work on from eligible tenderers, for the works detailed below by the undersigned.

On behalf of the **Managing Director, KNNL, Bengaluru,** the **Executive Engineer, KNNL, HBC Division, Athani,** invites Percentage Basis tender from interested, experienced and resourceful Civil Contractors from KPWD Class III and Above Contractors who fulfill the pre-qualification criteria for the bellow mentioned work.

The two cover bid submission procedure as per Rule 28 of KTPP Act shall be followed. The bidders are requested to submit their bids in two cover system including EMD in e-cash. The first cover (Technical Bid) should contain the documents as mentioned in Para 4, The second cover shall contain the financial bid. The Cover-I (Technical bid) will be opened first. Thereafter Cover-II (financial bid) of only those bidders who have fulfill the conditions contained in Para.4 will be opened.

The blank tender documents can be obtained through Website: **www.kpp-portal.karnataka.gov.in** and can be submitted through Electronic Tender only.

The Approximate Estimated Cost of Work is Rs. 110.51 Lakhs

1) The contractor can request for e-Tendering Documents: **from 17-01-2026 at 10.30 AM to 23-01-2026 upto 4.00 PM. 2)** Last Date and Time for Tender Queries: **21-01-2026 upto 4.00 PM. 3)** Pre Bid Meeting will be held in the Office of the EE, KNNL, HBC Division, Athani: **21-01-2026 at 11.00 AM 4)** Last Date for Submission of Completed e-Tendering Document: **from 17-01-2026 at 10.30 AM to 23-01-2026 upto 4.00 PM. 5)** Date of Opening of Technical Bid at EE, KNNL, HBC Division, Athani: **27-01-2026 at 11.00 AM. 6)** Date of Opening of Financial Bid at EE, KNNL, HBC Division, Athani: **28-01-2026 at 11.00 AM (Or After Approval of Technical Bid).**

Any other information can be had from the undersigned during the office hours on Telephone: **08289-251034** and H.P company helpline: **080-22485867.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer
KNNL, HBC Division, Athani.

DIPR/Belagavi/1645/Adverto/2025-26

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT
ENGINEERING WING
Office of the Chief Engineer, Arogya Soudha, 3rd Floor, Leprosy Hospital Premises, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 023 Telephone No.080-29557023 E-mail:**cekhsdrp@gmail.com & cekhsdrp-hfws@karnataka.gov.in**

No:HFWD/EW/CE/TA-3/AE-4,5&6/TND/KKRDB/2025-26/3535 Date:16.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender is invited from eligible contractors registered in KPWD in Two Tender document system in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform for the following works.

Sl. No.	Description of works	Approximate Estimate cost (Rs. in lakhs)	EMD (Rs.in Lakhs)	Stipulated period for Completion (including monsoon)
1	Construction of 6 Bedded Primary Health Centre (H TYPE) at Jirala, Koppal District.	279.00	4.20	09 Months
2	Construction of 6 Bedded Primary Health Centre (H TYPE) at Gowripura, Koppal District	279.00	4.20	09 Months
3	Construction of 6 Bedded Primary Health Centre (H TYPE) at Yadalapura, Raichur District.	278.00	4.20	09 Months
4	Upgradation of PHC to CHC at Pothnal Village, Raichur District.	976.00	14.70	11 Months
5	Construction of Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC) at Kalaburagi in Kalaburagi District. (Kalaburagi North)	1463.00	15.00	15 Months
6	Construction of Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC) at Kalaburagi in Kalaburagi District (Kalaburagi South)	1463.00	15.00	15 Months
7	Upgradation of 30 Bed CHC to 100 Bed TLH at Kukanur, Koppal District.	2809.00	29.00	18 Months
8	Upgradation of 100 Bedded TLH to 150 Bedded TLH at Bhalki in Bidar Taluk, Bidar District.	1290.00	15.00	15 Months
9	Upgradation of 100 Bedded TLH to 150 Bedded TLH at Shahapur in Yadgir District.	1248.00	15.00	15 Months
10	Construction of Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC) at Bidar in Bidar District.	1463.00	15.00	15 Months
11	Upgradation of PHC to CHC at Hatti Village, Raichur District.	995.00	15.00	11 Months
12	Upgradation of Existing 30 Bedded CHC To 50 Bedded CHC at Thavaragera in Koppal District.	462.00	6.93	09 Months
13	Upgradation of 100 Bedded TLH to 150 Bedded TLH at Gangavati Koppal District.	1290.00	15.00	15 Months
14	Construction of 6 Bedded Primary Health Centre (H TYPE) at Kottadoddi Village, Raichur District.	278.00	4.20	09 Months
15	Construction of Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC) at Raichur in Raichur District.	1462.00	15.00	15 Months

Calendar of Events:
(1) Last date for receipt of tenders: **16.02.2026 up to 16.00 hrs.**
(2) Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **17.02.2026 at 16.01 hrs.**
The tender details can be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform **(www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform to participate in this tender.

NOTE: 1. All the rights are reserved by the under signed for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids /individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. 2. Henceforth, any changes in the schedule/contents will not be published through newspapers and further changes will be updated only on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru

LOOKING FOR JOB OPPORTUNITY

Refer Classifieds on Wednesday

KARNATAKA SILK INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
3rd & 4th Floors, Public Utility Building, M.G. Road, Bengaluru – 560 001
Ph: 080- 25586550/25586402, Email: info@ksicsilk.com

No: KSIC/PR/ITEMS-W/02//2025-26 **Date:13.01.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

Tenders/Re-tender are invited through KPP Portal from Manufacturers/Dealers/Contractors for the below detailed items & work.

Sl. No.	Particulars	EMD (In Rs.)	Last Date and Time for uploading the Tender along with EMD	Technical Bids Opening Date and Time
1	Tender for Electrical works for the proposed 20 Nos. heavy Duty Silk Looms with Electronic Jacquard at KSIC SWU, Channapatna Unit.	10,000	30.01.2026 @03.00 PM	31.01.2026 @03.30 PM
2	Tender for Supply, Installation and Commissioning of CCTV cameras, monitors, intruder alarm system & required accessories at KSIC, SWF, Mysuru Unit.	12,000	16.02.2026 @03.00 PM	17.02.2026 @03.30 PM
3	Tender for Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 1 No. Sludge Dewatering machine for CETP available at KSIC, SWF, Mysuru Unit.	21,000	13.02.2026 @03.00 PM	16.02.2026 @03.30 PM
4	Tender for Procurement of 1 No. Tata Intra V70 Gold BS6 or equivalent Goods Vehicle for KSIC, S.F., T. Narasipura Unit.	28,000	16.02.2026 @03.00 PM	17.02.2026 @03.30 PM
5	Re-Tender for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 3 Nos. Retrofitting of Emission Control Devices to DG Set of 3X250 KVA at KSIC, SWF, Mysuru Unit.	54,000	05.02.2026 @03.00 PM	06.02.2026 @03.30 PM

Tender Documents, details of the Notification, schedule terms & conditions can be downloaded from **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Further details can be had from the office of the Undersigned during working hours or KPP Portal - helpdesk-080-46010000 and 080-68948777.

Sd/-
GENERAL MANAGER(Proc)

DIPR/CP/JA/5011/2025-26

Pakistan misusing UN platforms, says India

UNITED NATIONS, PTI: India called out Pakistan for misusing UN platforms to drive its "divisive agenda" after Islamabad's envoy raised the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in the General Assembly.

Counsellor in the Permanent Mission of India to the UN, Eldos Mathew Punnoose on Thursday said the right to self-determination must not be abused to encourage secession in pluralistic and democratic states. "Pakistan continues to misuse all platforms and processes in the UN to drive their divisive agenda," Punnoose said.

"This forum is no exception either and Pakistan made an unwarranted reference to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, an integral and inalienable part of India," Punnoose said, while delivering the national statement at the UN General Assembly Plenary on 'Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organisation'.

Machado presents Trump with her Nobel Peace Prize

Gesture reignites debate over US Prez's long-standing ambitions

WASHINGTON, NYT NEWS SERVICE

María Corina Machado, Venezuela's opposition leader and last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, presented her prize to President Donald Trump on Thursday during a meeting in the White House.

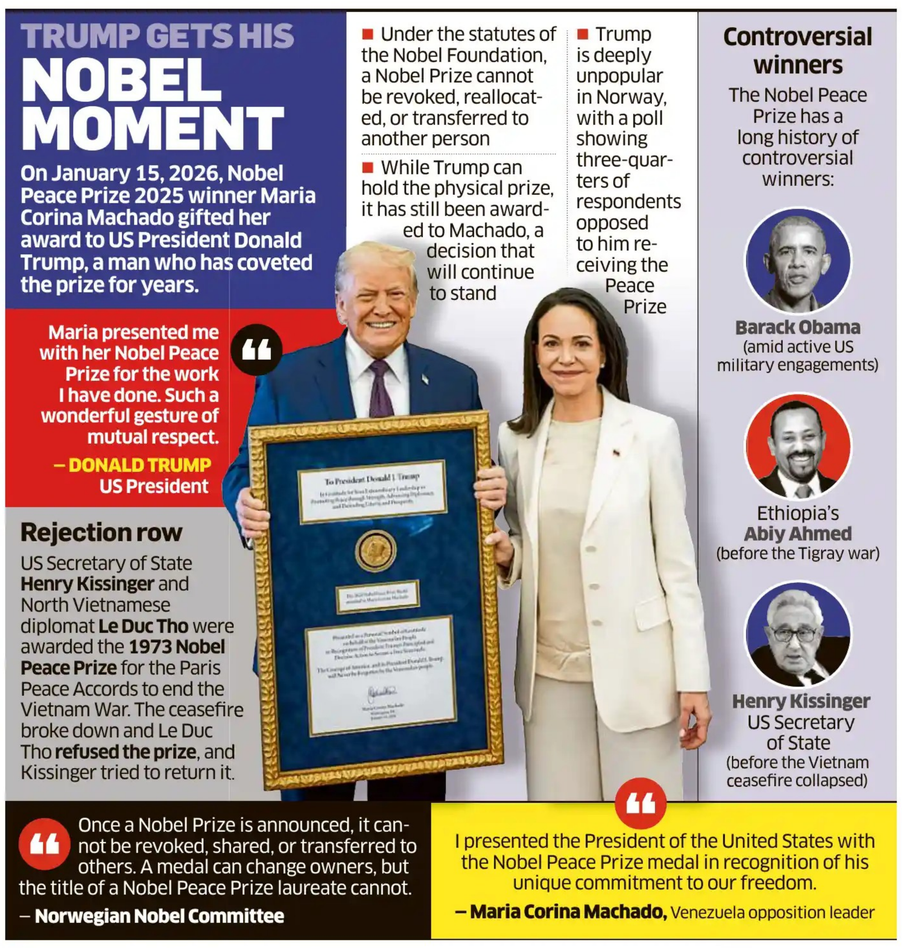
Trump took to social media several hours later to thank her. "María presented me with her Nobel Peace Prize for the work I have done," he wrote. "Such a wonderful gesture of mutual respect. Thank you, María!"

The White House shared on social media an image of Trump holding the frame containing the Nobel medal. The inscription reads that his "Principled and Decisive Action to Secure a Free Venezuela" has been recognised. The Nobel Committee has said the Peace Prize is not transferable.

For her part, Machado, speaking to reporters earlier after meeting with Trump, said she had made the presentation "as a recognition for his unique commitment to our freedom." The highly unusual gesture came after months of clamouring by the American president that he had deserved the prize that she was awarded for seeking to usher a peaceful transition to democracy in Venezuela.

Machado had repeatedly dedicated the prize to Trump and praised the US military operation nearly two weeks ago that ousted Venezuela's longtime authoritarian leader, Nicolás Maduro. Trump has made clear that he thought he had deserved the prize, saying he had ended several wars and castigating Norway for overlooking him. Beyond cheering US intervention in her country, Machado has remained mum about a bombing campaign against boats Trump says are smuggling drugs.

It is unclear what Machado gained out of her meeting with Trump. After ousting Maduro, he declined to install her in power, saying that "she's a very nice woman, but she doesn't have the respect" needed to lead the country. Her efforts to cozy up to Trump have been met with scorn across the Atlantic Ocean in Norway.


TRUMP GETS HIS NOBEL MOMENT
On January 15, 2026, Nobel Peace Prize 2025 winner Maria Corina Machado gifted her award to US President Donald Trump, a man who has coveted the prize for years.
Maria presented me with her Nobel Peace Prize for the work I have done. Such a wonderful gesture of mutual respect.
– DONALD TRUMP US President
Rejection row
US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and North Vietnamese diplomat Le Duc Tho were awarded the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize for the Paris Peace Accords to end the Vietnam War. The ceasefire broke down and Le Duc Tho refused the prize, and Kissinger tried to return it.
Under the statutes of the Nobel Foundation, a Nobel Prize cannot be revoked, reallocated, or transferred to another person
While Trump can hold the physical prize, it has still been awarded to Machado, a decision that will continue to stand
Trump is deeply unpopular in Norway, with a poll showing three-quarters of respondents opposed to him receiving the Peace Prize
Controversial winners
The Nobel Peace Prize has a long history of controversial winners:
Barack Obama (amid active US military engagements)
Ethiopia's Abiy Ahmed (before the Tigray war)
Henry Kissinger US Secretary of State (before the Vietnam ceasefire collapsed)
Once a Nobel Prize is announced, it cannot be revoked, shared, or transferred to others. A medal can change owners, but the title of a Nobel Peace Prize laureate cannot.
– Norwegian Nobel Committee
I presented the President of the United States with the Nobel Peace Prize medal in recognition of his unique commitment to our freedom.
– Maria Corina Machado, Venezuela opposition leader

Sri Lankan port to be developed with Indian assistance

COLOMBO, PTI: India has agreed to provide $60 million to renovate the port at Kankesanthurai in Jaffna district in northern Sri Lanka, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake said on Friday.

Dissanayake was addressing a gathering at an event near Jaffna, the cultural capital of the minority Tamil community, when he made the announcement.

Noting that Jaffna district, with its beautiful coastline and many attractions, has a high potential for tourism development, he said: "We plan to address the shortcomings at Palaly Airport and renovate it. We will begin work at the Kankesanthurai Port very soon, and the Government of India has agreed to provide assistance of $60 million for this purpose."

The India-Sri Lanka Joint Statement of December 16, 2024 after the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Dissanayake in New Delhi had mentioned that the two sides would "explore the possibility of jointly working on rehabilitation of Kankesanthurai port in Sri Lanka, which will be implemented with grant assistance from the Government of India."

On Friday, Dissanayake was attending the launch of the 2026 National Housing Programme, 'A Place to Belong - A Beautiful Life', for 31,218 families nationwide, including 2,500 war-displaced families from the North and East, at Chavakachcheri, near Jaffna.

Trump warns of tariffs in Greenland push

US lawmakers land in Denmark to 'lower temperature'

COPENHAGEN, AP/REUTERS

US President Donald Trump on Friday suggested he could impose tariffs on countries that refuse to support Washington's control of Greenland, as a bipartisan congressional delegation met Danish and Greenlandic leaders in Copenhagen to ease tensions.

Trump has repeatedly insisted that the US should control Greenland, a semiautonomous territory of Denmark, and said earlier this week that anything short of the island being under US control would be "unacceptable". "I may put a tariff on countries if they don't go along with Greenland," Trump said on Friday.

During an unrelated event at the White House about rural health care, he recounted on Friday how he had threatened European allies with tariffs on pharmaceuticals. "I may do that for Greenland too," Trump said. "I may put a tariff on countries if they don't go along with Greenland," he said.

This was the first time Trump publicly raised the possibility of using tariffs to push the issue. Earlier in the week, the foreign ministers of Denmark and Greenland met in Washington with US Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The talks failed to resolve fundamental differences.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan delegation of US lawmakers met Danish and Greenlandic leaders in Copenhagen, seeking to "lower the temperature". The 11-member delegation, led by Democratic Senator Chris Coons, met Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen, along with Danish and Greenlandic parliamentarians.

Lawmakers from both Trump's Republican Party and opposition Democrats have said they would support legislation to limit the president's ability to seize Greenland.

US Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) talks to journalists after meeting members of the Danish Parliament and a Greenlandic committee in Copenhagen on Friday. REUTERS

Canada breaks with US to slash tariffs on Chinese EVs

BEIJING, NYT NEWS SERVICE

Canada will lower tariffs on some Chinese electric vehicles and China will do the same for Canadian canola products, a major shift in policy that was announced on Friday during a landmark state visit by Prime Minister Mark Carney of Canada to Beijing.

Carney announced that Canada will allow up to 49,000 Chinese electric vehicles into the Canadian market under a preferential tariff rate of 6.1%. That is much lower than the current rate of 100% that Canada imposed in 2024 at the behest of the US.

Carney made his announcement after meeting with President Xi Jinping of China in Beijing on Friday, where the two leaders hailed a new "strategic partnership" between the countries, as the previously frosty relationship showed signs of a thaw.

The Chinese government's summaries of the talks were broader, with no specific mention of changes to the tariffs on either canola or Chinese electric vehicles.

The tariff changes Carney announced were modest, but they signal an important break with the United States as Canada seeks to urgently diversify its trading partners and reduce its reliance on the US.

President Donald Trump has imposed tariffs on some key Canadian exports like lumber, steel and autos. He has also threatened Canadian sovereignty, a shift Carney has described as a "rupture."

The turmoil in the relationship between Canada and the United States has led to a near freeze in trade talks between the two allies. A review of their free trade agreement, which includes Mexico, is expected later this year.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Friday. REUTERS

Ex-South Korean prez Yoon gets 5-yr prison term

SEOUL, AP/PTI: A South Korean court sentenced former President Yoon Suk Yeol to five years in prison Friday in the first verdict from eight criminal trials over the martial law debacle that forced him out of office and other allegations.

Yoon was impeached, arrested and dismissed as president after his short-lived imposition of martial law in December 2024 triggered huge public protests calling for his ouster.

The most significant criminal charge against him alleges that his martial law enforcement amounted to a rebellion, and the independent counsel has requested the death sentence in the case that is to be decided in a ruling next month. In Friday's case, the Seoul Central District Court sentenced Yoon for defying attempts to detain him and fabricating the martial law.

All options are on the table, US warns Iran

UNITED NATIONS, AP/PTI

After weeks of escalating tension, US and Iranian officials faced each other Thursday at the UN Security Council, where America's envoy renewed threats against the Islamic Republic despite President Donald Trump's efforts to lower the temperature between the two adversaries.

The US was joined by Iranian dissidents in rebuking the government's bloody crackdown on nationwide protests that activists say has killed at least 2,637 people.

"Colleagues, let me be clear: President Trump is a man of action, not endless talk like we see at the United Nations," Mike Waltz, US ambassador to the UN, said in a statement.

"He has made it clear that all options are on the table to stop the slaughter. And no one should know that better than the leadership of the Iranian regime." Waltz's remarks came as the prospect of US retaliation for the protesters' deaths still hung over the region, though Trump signaled a possible de-escalation, saying the killing appeared to be ending.

By Thursday, the protests challenging Iran's theocracy appeared increasingly smothered, but the state-ordered internet and communication blackout remained.

Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran's last shah, addresses a press conference in Washington DC on Friday. REUTERS

DONALD TRUMP
US President

"I greatly respect the fact that all scheduled hangings, which were to take place yesterday (Over 800 of them), have been cancelled by the leadership of Iran. Thank you!

Will return: Pahlavi

On Friday, the son of Iran's late shah he was confident the Islamic republic would fall in the face of mass protests and called for intervention. "The Islamic Republic will fall -- not if, but when," Reza Pahlavi told a news conference in Washington. "I will return to Iran."

Pahlavi has lived in exile in the United States since the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled his pro-Western father.

Taiwan inks 'best' trade deal with US despite China protests

TAIPEI (TAIWAN), AP/PTI: Taiwan's premier on Friday hailed a new trade deal with the US as the "best tariff deal" even as a Chinese official in Beijing condemned the accord.

The agreement cuts US tariffs on Taiwanese goods to 15 per cent in exchange for $250 billion in new investments in the US tech industry. It is comparable to deals with the European Union and Japan worked out after President Donald Trump proposed sweeping tariffs for many US trading partners.

"For the time being, we obtained the best tariff deal enjoyed by the countries with trade surplus with the US," said Taiwan Premier Cho Jung-tai. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson slammed the deal as violation of its sovereignty.

Government of Karnataka

KARNATAKA EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY

Sampige Road, 18th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru – 560 012.
Website:http://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/ e-mail: keauthority-ka@nic.in

No. :ED/KEA/ADMN/CR-04/2026-27 Date: 16-01-2026

NOTIFICATION

ADMISSION TO PROFESSIONAL COURSES IN THE STATE OF KARNATAKA FOR THE YEAR - 2026

As per Rule 3, Rule 6(3) & Rule 7 of *Karnataka Selection of Candidates for Admission to Government seats in Professional Educational Institutions Rules 2006 (Amendments)* and pursuant to the directions of the Government, Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) is inviting applications from the eligible Karnataka candidates for ***"Common Entrance Test-2026"*** for the purpose of determining the eligibility / merit, for admission to the First year or First semester of full time courses for Government share of seats in Engineering, Bachelor of Yoga and Naturopathy (BNYS), B.Sc. (Nursing), Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry (B.V.Sc. & A.H.),Farm Science courses i.e., [i.e., B.Sc. (Hons) Agriculture, B.Sc. (Hons) Sericulture, B.Sc. (Hons) Horticulture, B.Sc (Hons) Forestry, B.Tech (Bio-Technology), B.Sc.(Hons) Community Science, B.Tech (Agricultural Engineering), B.Tech (Food Technology), B.Tech (D. Tech), B.F.Sc (Fisheries), B.Sc. (Hons) Agri. Business Management] B. Pharma, Pharma-D, 2nd year B-Pharma (Lateral Entry) courses in Government / University / Private Aided / Private Un-Aided Professional Educational Institutions in the State of Karnataka for the academic year 2026-27 as per the seat matrix to be notified by Government.

1. In order to become eligible to obtain admission through KEA to the above mentioned professional courses, a candidate must register for ***CET-2026,*** fill the application through online, pay the application fees, download the admission ticket and appear for the Common Entrance Test-2026 conducted by KEA, Bangalore. *Online application is an application-cum-verification module. Hence, the candidates are advised to fill all the details carefully. After submission of application, details of the claims "Claim Certificate" will be printed.*
2. After confirmation of the prescribed seven years of study (including 10th class or 2nd PUC/12th class) for eligibility to Government seats under Eligibility Clause-a, the status "Successfully Verified" will be mentioned in the Claim Certificate. Such candidates will be able to print the CET-2026 application form from their candidate portal. These candidates are not required to visit any office or college for document verification. After the declaration of the CET-2026 results, the verification slip will be made available for download.
3. Candidate who claims eligibility clause-a, and Claimed reservation for having studied (a) 10 full academic years in Kannada medium from 1st standard to 10th standard; (b) 10 full academic years in rural areas from 1st standard to 10th standard; (c) 10 years from 1st standard to 12th standard for Tulu, Tamil, Telugu, Kodava Linguistic Minority reservation; or (d) Religious Minority (Muslim / Christian) reservation; for these candidates, after submitting the application only the claim slip will be downloaded in the first instance, (Claimed Verified OR Claimed not verified OR not Claimed" will be printed on the Claims Certificate) and at this stage, there is no provision to print the application. These candidates should get their documents verified by submitting all the documents at the college where they are presently studying or in any Government college. After verifying in the respective college, the candidates will be allowed to log in to the portal and print the CET-2026 application form.
4. Details of Subjects to appear in CET-2026 for various Professional Courses.

Sl. No.	For Admission to 1st Year	Subjects to appear in CET-2026
i	Engineering / Technology courses	Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics (PCM)
ii	Farm Science courses i.e., [i.e., B.Sc. (Hons) Agriculture, B.Sc. (Hons) Sericulture, B.Sc. (Hons) Horticulture, B.Sc (Hons) Forestry, B.Tech (Bio-Technology), B.Sc.(Hons) Community Science, B.Tech (Agricultural Engineering), B.Tech (Food Technology), B.Tech (D. Tech), B.F.Sc (Fisheries), B.Sc. (Hons) Agri. Business Management]	Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology (PCMB)
iii	Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Naturopathy & Yoga and B.Sc. (Nursing)	Physics, Chemistry, Biology (PCB)
iv	B-Pharma, 2nd Year B. Pharma, Pharma-D	PCM or PCB

5. CANDIDATES TO APPEAR ENTRANCE EXAM FOR OTHER COURSES - 2026

i	Medical, Dental and AYUSH	UGNEET	Candidates must compulsorily register for CET-2026, fill the application and pay the fees to become eligible to participate in the KEA counselling.
ii	Architecture	NATA	
iii	For admission to D.Pharma, B.P.T., B.Sc. Allied Health Sciences, BPO courses - Selection is based on PU Marks	NO Entrance Exam – but they must compulsorily register for CET-2026 and fill the application and pay the fees to become eligible to participate in the counselling.	

6. As per Government order No. MED 51 RGU 2023 dated 13-04-2023 for admission to B.Sc. (Nursing) courses, Karnataka and non-Karnataka candidates have to appear for Common Entrance Test conducted by KEA. The non-Karnataka candidates will not be eligible for admission to engineering stream courses through KEA and they will also be not eligible for reservation.

Before registering through online for admission to any Professional courses in the state of Karnataka, applicants are hereby informed to read the Information Bulletin and understand the eligibility conditions, classification of seats (different types of category of seats) and eligibility to claim such seats.

Eligibility: As per Rule 5(1) of *Karnataka Selection of Candidates for Admission to Government seats in Professional Educational Institutions Rules 2006 (Amendments),* No candidate shall be eligible for admission to Government Seats unless he is a citizen of India and satisfies any one of the eligibility conditions specified therein. The candidates who do not satisfy any of the Clauses / Eligibility Criteria are not eligible for admission to professional courses under Government quota seats through KEA. Eligibility for OCI / PIO candidates for Government seats shall be as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP No.891 /2021.

7. UGCET-2026-Information Bulletin consisting of details about mode of submission of application through online, eligibility clauses, academic eligibility criteria etc will be hosted on the KEA Website **https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/** for the information of the candidates. Candidates can download the same from KEA Website.
8. Schedule for online application – payment of fees for CET-2026.

i.	Commencement of Registration and filling of Application-cum-verification module	From 11.00 am on 17-01-2026
ii.	Last date to fill the application online	16-02-2026 up to 11.59 pm
iii.	Last date to pay the application fees-online	18-02-2026
iv.	Downloading of Admission Tickets	From 11.00 am onwards on 10-04-2026

COMMON ENTRANCE TEST – 2026 TIME TABLE

Date	Day	Timings	Subject	Marks / Questions
23-04-2026	Thursday	10.30 am – 11.50 am	Physics	60
		02.30 pm – 03.50 pm	Chemistry	60
24-04-2026	Friday	10.30 am – 11.50 am	Mathematics	60
		02.30 pm – 03.50 pm	Biology	60

Kannada Language Test FOR HORANADU AND GADINADU KANNADIGA CANDIDATES at Bengaluru, Belagavi, Bijapura, Mangalore Districts only

22-04-2026	Wednesday	10.30 am to 11.30 am	4th Standard level	50

NOTE:

a. The question papers of the Common Entrance Test-2026 will be based on the First and Second PUC syllabi prescribed by the Department of Pre-University Education of Karnataka State. Regarding the syllabus to be adopted for Common Entrance Test-2026, the subject experts of the Department of School Education (Pre-University) have reviewed the Syllabus of PCMB subjects adopted for the 1st and 2nd PUC classes in Karnataka state and the syllabus to be adopted for CET-2026 will be published on the KEA Website for the information of the students.
b. *Candidates can clarify their doubts regarding filling of online application at their respective colleges in Karnataka.*
c. The "CET-2026 Diksuchi" ("ಸಿಇಟಿ–2026 ದಿಕ್ಸೂಚಿ"), containing brief information about CET-2026, will be distributed to every student in the state at their college.

Sd/- (H. Prasanna, IAS)
Executive Director.

DIPR/CP/5067/2025-26

http://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/ keaauthority.ka@nic.in
https://x.com/kea_karnataka https://www.youtube.com/@keavikasana
KEA Helpline Nos.: 080 – 23 460 460 (8 Lines) 8.00 am to 8.00 pm (except General Holidays)

IT firms take over Rs 4,900-cr hit due to new labour codes

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

The country's top five IT services companies cumulatively took an over Rs 4,900-crore hit in the December quarter due to implementation of the new labour codes that impacted all the firms' Q3 net profits.

In November 2025, the government notified the four Labour Codes — the Code on Wages, 2019; the Industrial Relations Code, 2020; the Code on Social Security, 2020; and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 — consolidating 29 existing labour laws. Since it was implemented in Q3, Tata Consultancy Services reported a Rs 2,128-crore impact, Infosys (Rs 1,289 crore), HCLTech (Rs 948 crore), Wipro (Rs 302 crore), and Tech Mahindra (Rs 272.4 crore) in their December quarter earnings.

Specialist staffing firm Xpheno Co-founder Kamal Karanth said the new labour codes have a wide scope of applicability across sectors, and also coverage across all categories of employees irrespective of levels, wages and compensation. "The new codes, in letter and spirit, intend to simplify interpretation and administration of workforce-related laws and statutory regulations. As a simplified amalgamation of a host of traditional labour laws, the new codes are set to operate in the interest of all employers and employees, while enhancing social security, increasing formalising and easing the compliance management," he said.

He added that the key change in pay structure will be driven by the requirement to keep Basic Pay plus DA at a minimum of 50% of CTC. "The popular practice of keeping a low basic pay at 30-40%, to reduce statutory contributions like PF, will now have to be discontinued. Employees cannot anymore park a majority portion of the CTC towards allowances that do not attract statutory contributions. This shift in structure will reflect in the form of a lowered net take home, as statutory deductions are set to increase," he further said.

The near-term net impact will be a lowered monthly take home, but with a long-term of future benefits through higher statutory savings.

CIEL HR MD and CEO Aditya Narayan Mishra said the implementation of labour codes is increasing the overall cost of employment for organisations, which may impact salary hikes.

India world's third largest startup ecosystem: PM

Modi says 44,000 new startups registered in 2025

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

"The past ten years have proven the nation's capabilities. Our goal must be that in the coming ten years, India leads the world in new startup trends and technologies.

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India has emerged as the world's third largest startup ecosystem with a total tally surpassing 2 lakh, including 125 unicorns, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday.

Nearly 44,000 startups were registered in 2025 alone — the highest in any single year since the Startup India initiative was launched in 2016.

Speaking at an event to mark the 10th anniversary of Startup India, Modi said, "Startup India has given birth to a new culture in the country. Earlier, new businesses and ventures were mostly started by children of large industrial families, because they alone had easy access to funding and support."

"Most children from middle-class and poor families could only dream of jobs. But Startup India has changed this mindset. Now, youth from Tier-2 and 3 cities, even from villages, are opening their own startups. And these very young people are striving to solve the most-pressing grassroots problems," he added.

The PM asked startups to focus more on manufacturing and createing new products. "Work on new ideas, solve problems. In past decades, we have achieved remarkable success in digital startups and the services sector. Now the time has come for our startups to focus more on manufacturing. We must create new products," he said.

"The past ten years have proven the nation's capabilities. Our goal must be that in the coming ten years, India leads the world in new startup trends and technologies," he added.

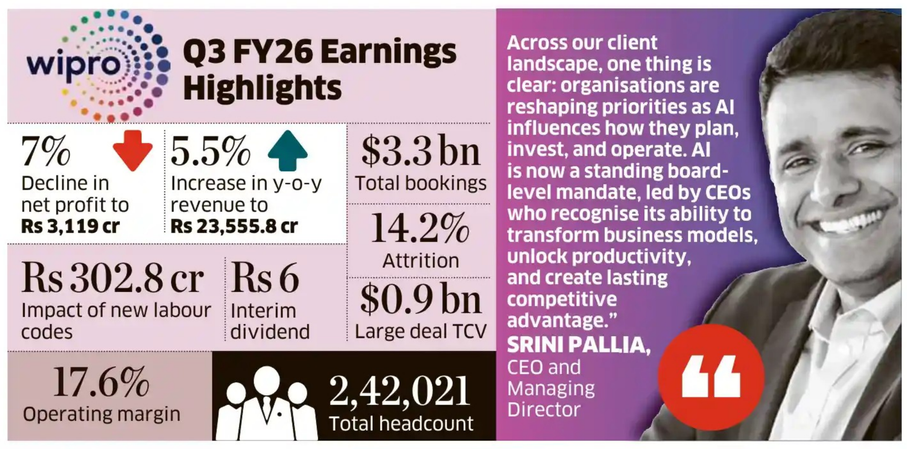
Speaking at the event Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said startups have generated around 21 lakh jobs across the country.

Startup India was launched in 2016 to "nurture innovation, promote entrepreneurship, and enable investment-driven growth with a vision of India being a nation of job creators instead of job seekers".

To strengthen the startup ecosystem, Goyal pointed out that the government constituted a Fund of Funds worth Rs 10,000 crore in 2016 to provide seed capital and enable startups to take calculated risks. Following the successful utilisation of the first tranche, a second tranche of Rs 10,000 crore was sanctioned in the 2025 Union Budget.

The minister informed that a significant portion of this fund would be deployed in deep-tech and high-tech sectors such as defence and aerospace.

He said a draft guideline for the operationalisation of the second phase of the "fund of funds" scheme is ready. "It will be operationalised soon," Goyal said. He added that the Centre has announced a Rs 1-lakh crore fund dedicated to research, development, and innovation, which will support researchers, scientists, and startups in undertaking advanced research in deep tech at par with global standards.


wipro
Q3 FY26 Earnings Highlights
7%
Decline in net profit to Rs 3,119 cr
5.5%
Increase in y-o-y revenue to Rs 23,555.8 cr
$3.3 bn
Total bookings
14.2%
Attrition
Rs 302.8 cr
Impact of new labour codes
Rs 6
Interim dividend
$0.9 bn
Large deal TCV
17.6%
Operating margin
2,42,021
Total headcount
Across our client landscape, one thing is clear: organisations are reshaping priorities as AI influences how they plan, invest, and operate. AI is now a standing board-level mandate, led by CEOs who recognise its ability to transform business models, unlock productivity, and create lasting competitive advantage."
SRINI PALLIA,
CEO and Managing Director

Wipro Q3 net profit declines 7% to Rs 3,119 crore

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

IT services firm Wipro on Friday reported a 7% decline in its consolidated net profit for the quarter ended December 2025 at Rs 3,119 crore, compared to Rs 3,353.8 crore in the year-ago period, due to the implementation of new labour codes.

The company's CFO, Aparna Iyer, during the post-earnings press conference said the implementation of the labour codes (Rs 302 crore) and restructuring exercise (Rs 263 crore) have impacted the company's net income and EPS.

"We've now completed the restructuring that we wanted and do not anticipate any further changes," she said, adding that they don't anticipate any continuing impact of the labour codes on the company's financials.

The company's revenue from operations in the December quarter stood at Rs 23,555.8 crore, a 5.5% increase compared to Rs 22,318.8 crore in the year-ago period. Wipro's revenue from its IT Services business segment is expected to be in the range of $2,635 million-$2,688 million, translating to a sequential guidance of 0-2% in constant currency terms, for the quarter ending March 31, 2026.

Wipro CEO and MD Srini Pallia said they are seeing cost optimisation, vendor consolidation, and a clear shift toward AI-led transformation. The firm's operating margin stood at 17.6%, and overall deal bookings were at $3.3 billion.

Last month, Wipro announced that its acquisition of the Digital Transformation Solutions (DTS) business unit of HARMAN, a Samsung company, had been completed. The company acquired it for about Rs 3,272 crore ($375 million). Pallia said that with the acquisition now complete, they have added engineering and AI capabilities that truly complement what they do. "This strengthens our Engineering Global Business Line and helps us accelerate AI-driven product innovation for clients. The integration also opens new regions and high-growth industries, and allows us to take on larger, more complex transformation programmes," he said.

Meanwhile, Wipro is expected to hire 7,500-8,000 freshers for this fiscal, down from its earlier target of 10,000. The company has hired only 400 freshers in Q3. When asked about the total number of freshers the company would hire this fiscal, Wipro's Chief Human Resource Officer Saurabh Govil said that they have hired 5,000 freshers so far.

RIL net stays flat at Rs 18,645 cr in Q3

Weakness in retail biz offset gains in other segments

MUMBAI, PTI

Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) on Friday reported almost a flat net profit of Rs 18,645 crore for the third quarter, as decline in gas production and weakness in its retail business offset gains in other segments.

The country's largest conglomerate saw muted earnings growth in the retail business on GST rate rationalisation, demerger of consumer product business and distribution of festive buying split between two quarters. This offset healthy margins driving energy and digital businesses.

Its consolidated net profit of Rs 18,645 crore, or Rs 13.78 per share, in October-December — the third quarter of the current 2025-26 fiscal — compared to Rs 18,540 crore, or Rs 13.70 per share a year back, according to a company statement.

Jio Platforms saw a nearly 13% rise in revenue on robust subscriber addition, an increase in earnings per user and scale-up of digital services. Oil-to-Chemicals business saw an 8.4% rise in revenue on strong fuel cracks (margins), production increase and the group expanding its fuel retailing network.

Revenue from operations rose to Rs 2.69 lakh crore from Rs 2.43 lakh crore in October-December 2024. Pre-tax profit or EBITDA grew 6.1% to Rs 48,003 crore.

Giving segment-wise growth, Reliance said retail business EBITDA was up 1.3% and profit at 2.7% (Rs 3,551 crore), even as the company opened 431 new stores, and it clocked 1.6 million daily order run-rate on quick commerce.

The natural decline in its KG fields saw the oil and gas business EBIDTA drop nearly 13% to Rs 4,857 crore. Output fell almost 10% in the third quarter, while the price realised was also lower.

JioHotstar averaged 450 million MAUs; up 13% quarter-on-quarter and almost on par with the IPL quarter (Q1FY26).

The conglomerate's net debt was almost flat at Rs 1.17 lakh crore at the end of December 2025. Capital expenditure for the quarter ended December 31, 2025, was Rs 33,826 crore, covered well by cash profit of Rs 41,303 crore.

Commenting on the results, Reliance CMD Mukesh Ambani said FY26 (April 2025 to March 2026 fiscal year) reflects consistent financial delivery and operational resilience across businesses.

IN BRIEF

Rupee crashes 44 paise to settle near all-time low at 90.78/US dollar

MUMBAI, PTI: The Indian rupee tumbled for the third straight session, losing 44 paise to settle near its lowest level at 90.78 against the US dollar on Friday, on strong dollar demand and persistent foreign fund outflows.

Forex traders said lingering concerns over US-India trade negotiations and geopolitical tensions further dented investor sentiment.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 90.37 and touched an intraday low of 90.89 against the greenback. It ended the session at 90.78 against the greenback, down 44 paise from Wednesday's close.

The domestic foreign exchange market was closed on Thursday due to the Mumbai municipal corporation elections.

The rupee marked its third straight session of decline, during which it has fallen 61 paise.

The Indian currency recorded its lowest closing level of 90.93 on December 16, when it also saw its lifetime low of 91.14 in intraday trade.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.08% lower at 99.24.

Tech Mahindra Q3 net profit up 14%

BENGALURU, DHNS: Tech Mahindra on Friday reported a 14% increase in consolidated net profit for the quarter ended December 2025, at Rs 1,122 crore, compared to Rs 983 crore in the year-ago period. Its revenue from operations in the quarter stood at Rs 14,393.2 crore, an 8% increase, compared to Rs 13,285.6 crore in the same quarter last year.

The company's EBIT Margin was at 13.1%, and its new deal wins TCV stood at $1,096 million, up 47% y-o-y.

Its total headcount was at 1,49,616, down 872 y-o-y and IT attrition was at 12.3%.

Irina Ghose is Anthropic MD of India

BENGALURU, DHNS: AI safety and research firm Anthropic on Friday announced the appointment of Irina Ghose as Managing Director of India.

Irina Ghose

The company said that Ghose brings more than three decades of experience in scaling technology businesses. She most-recently served as Managing Director, Microsoft India, where she led enterprise AI adoption across major Indian industries, including BFSI, manufacturing, healthcare, technology services, and government. This appointment comes at a time when the company is strengthening its presence in India. India has the second-largest user base globally for Claude.ai. Also, the company plans to open its Bengaluru office soon.

Sugar mills owe Rs 4,390 crore to farmers for 2025-26 season

BENGALURU, DHNS: Sugar mills in Karnataka owe a total of Rs 12,397.33 crore to farmers towards cane crushing including harvesting and transportation (H&T) charges for the sugar season 2025-26. Of this, mills have already paid Rs 8,058.43 crore as on December 31, 2025, according to data available with the Commissioner for Cane Development and Director of Sugar, Government of Karnataka.

In the ongoing sugar season, mills have crushed 312.61 lakh metric tonnes of sugarcane and produced 25.25 lakh metric tonnes of sugar till December 31.

Responding to a report published by *DH* on Friday, Govindreddy, Commissioner for Cane Development and Director of Sugar, said, "Sugar mills will not suffer losses of Rs 4,000 crore. The profit/losses will be known only after the crushing season is completed and all sugar and by-products are sold. The crushing season will end on September 30, 2026, for the current year. It is premature to judge at this stage."

He said the government has asked factories to pay Rs 50 per tonne, which will amount to Rs 300 crore for all 81 factories in the state. The government too will pay Rs 50 per tonne, thereby sharing a burden of Rs 300 crore from state exchequer. Additional burden on all factories is just Rs 300 crore."

The sugarcane payments that are due as on December 31 is Rs 4,390.35 crore. They are the routine payments that factories make to their sugarcane suppliers, Govindreddy added.

'India to ease rules to up foreign spend in domestic defence firms'

NEW DELHI, REUTERS: India plans to make it much easier for foreign firms to invest in defence companies, two government sources said — a move that would align with efforts to boost domestic manufacturing after last year's conflict with Pakistan.

The cap on FDI in defence firms with existing licences under the so-called automatic route, where government approval is not required, is set to be raised to 74% from 49%, the sources said.

Presently, foreign investors can only own 74% of an Indian defence business under the automatic route when the companies are seeking new licenses.

The government is also in discussions about dropping a condition that stipulates foreign investment beyond 74% is only allowed if it "results in access to modern technology" - wording that has been criticised by experts as vague and ambiguous.

Taking majority stakes

The planned easing of these rules, which has not been previously reported, is aimed at encouraging companies from defence partner nations to take majority stakes in Indian ventures, said the sources, adding that the reforms could be enacted in the next couple of months.

India's trade and defence ministries did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Another condition set to be dropped is a requirement for fully export-oriented defence manufacturers to set up domestic maintenance and support facilities, the sources said.

"This condition compelled companies to first set up a base for maintenance activities, which can now be outsourced by the export-oriented units, making it easier for them to attract foreign investment," said Amit Cowshish, a former Defence Ministry official.

Foreign defence firms that currently have operations in India through joint ventures or strategic partnerships include France's Airbus, US' Lockheed Martin and Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. India also has extensive defence ties with Russia.

That said, foreign equity inflows into India's defence sector have been muted, accounting for $26.5 million of total foreign inflows of $765 billion in the 25 years through September 2025, according to government data.

Don't Miss
Tomorrow's DH on Sunday

DECCAN HERALD

BIG PICTURE
Amitav Ghosh on climate, memory and mythmaking.

BOOKS
The brewing crisis in the Great Nicobar Island.

ART & PURSUITS
An exhibition on felines in Indian art.

WELLNESS
Is a cold shower really worth the effort?

TRAVEL
What to keep in mind while travelling in Bulgaria.

FOOD & DRINK
Have you tasted chimney cakes?

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Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal only)

No. SE(E)/Tr(O)C-N/EE(E)/AEE(E)-2/F-T6/25-26/2739 Date: 16.01.2026

KPTCL invites tenders through KPP Portal for the following works coming under the jurisdiction of Transmission (Operation) North Circle, Bengaluru" on Total Turnkey, Two Part & Percentage Basis.

1). Tender No. **KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT2904/CALL-2**, Tender for Grounding of 220kV Bus PT's and 66kV Bus PT's by providing cast iron pipe and accessories at 220/66/11kV Puttenahalli Yelahanka Receiving station,KPTCL.

2). Tender No. **KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3226**, Tender for Bus-Coupling of Bank-2 and Bank-3 by laying of 1X1000sq.mm UG cable between Bank-2 and Bank-3 at 66/11kV Sub-station, Banasawadi Receiving station, KPTCL.

Note: The bid will be received through KPP Portal mode only. The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry can be got by logging on to Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **17.01.2026.** Any Additional information shall be obtained from the under signed.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer(Elec.), Transmission(Operation) Circle-North, KPTCL, U.A.S. Campus, Hebbal, Bengaluru-560 024.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE, U.R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL Airport Road, Bengaluru - 560 017 (Phone: 080 25084184, 4156)
BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

Sl. No	Description	Details		
1	Name of work	Providing Fencing and Paver Blocks for High Speed Diesel (HSD) Storage Yard near Substation -2 at ISITE Campus, URSC, Marathahalli, Bengaluru.	Providing and Erecting Modular Partitions Workstations at Various Locations at Main Campus, URSC, Vimanapura, Bengaluru.	Modification to Audio & Video Studio at Main Building, Main Campus, URSC – Civil Work including Acoustic & Lighting Design.
2	E-Tender Notice No.	URSC/C&MG/C/M/32/2025-26, Dt.16/01/2026	URSC/C&MG/C/M/33/2025-26, Dt.16/01/2026	URSC/C&MG/C/M/34/2025-26, Dt.16/01/2026
3	Estimated cost put to Tender	₹ 24.00 Lakhs	₹ 23.57 Lakhs	₹ 13.28 Lakhs
4	Period of completion	Three Months	Twelve Months	Four Months
5	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**₹ 48,000/- valid for 180 days**	**₹ 47,140/- valid for 180 days**	**₹ 26,560.00/- valid for 180 days**

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details along with Hindi version in website: **www.isro.gov.in** and download the tender documents from **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO**.

Sd/-
Group Director, C&MG, URSC

Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limited
(Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
Upper Bhadra Project Division No. 6, Somaguddu Road, Challakere. Phone/Fax No.: 08195-250307,
e-mail: ubpee06@gmail.com

No: VJNL/UBP/EE/D-6/CLK/TEN.NOTN/2025-26/1121
DATE: 14.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

The Executive Engineer UBP Division No.06, Challakere, invites the tenders on behalf of the Managing Director, VJNL, Bangalore under 4701 grants for the following two works coming under this division. The Indent No. 1) VJNL/2025-26/IW/WORK_INDENT450 - Amout put to tender is Rs. 41.90 Lakhs and 2) VJNL/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT452 - Amout put to tender is Rs. 169.45 Lakhs. The contractors can download and submit the completed bid documents throught KPP-Portal web site KPPP portal website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 14.01.2026 to 28.01.2026 upto 17.00 hours. The pre-bid meeting will be held on 22.01.2026 at 11.30 am at Offiice of the Chief Engineer, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Ltd., Upper Bhadra Project Zone, Chitradurga. Details such as Qualification of Bidders/ Tender conditions/EMD/Tender Processing fee etc can be obtained through KPP Portal or from the office of the under signed during the office hours. The tender will be opended on 30.01.2026 at the office of the Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP Division No.6, Challakere through KPP-Portal. Tender accepting authority reserves all the rights to revise, modifiy or cancel the tender at any stage.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/602/2025-26

Sd/-Executive Engineer, VJNL, Upper Bhadra Project, Division 6, Challakere

Government of Karnataka
Zilla Panchayat Shivamogga
Office of The Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Divison, Sagara.
No.: EE/PRE/DS/S.S.H.Sagara/KW-1&3/AE/JE/2025-26/2465
Date: 15.01.2026

Tender Notice (Through "K.P.P.P.")

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Divison, Sagara invites Itemwar e-Tender subject to KW-1&3 (Standard Tender Document) Rules from eligible, contractors registered in Public Works Department and Registered in "K.P.P.P." Institution for the works under 5054 S.C.P./T.S.P. for the year 2025-26 and Link Document Scheme in the jurisdiction of this Division.

1. Date for downloading Tender Form from: 14.01.2026 to 22.01.2026 **2.** Last date to submit Tender Form: 22.01.2026, 16.00 Hrs. **3.** Date of opening bid: 23.01.2026, 16.01 Hrs.

1. General Works: 22788,21017-Call-2,22746,21430,21437

2. Category II-A Works: 22779 **3. Category I Works**: 22204

For details of "K.P.P.P." website tender contact the office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Sagara and can be viewed in "K.P.P.P." website (www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in) and can be downloaded. Further information can be obtained from the concerned case worker of this office on phone No. 08183-226064 during office hours or contact helpdesk phone No.: 080-25501216, 25501227.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Sagara

DIPR/smg/NO:127/01/ksmca/25-26/1648

Mesmerising MONGOLIA

Valsala Rajan writes about Mongolia's vast history, wild landscapes and living traditions

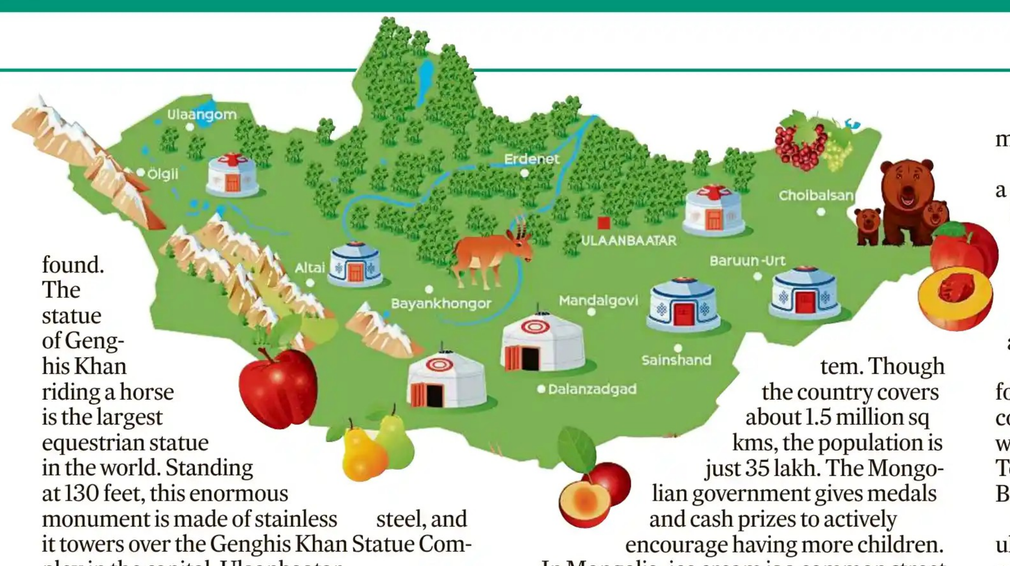
A Mongol without a horse is like a bird without wings", is a traditional Mongolian proverb.

On a recent trip abroad, we met a young woman from Mongolia. She was travelling alone; she seemed a feisty, outgoing sort of person and meeting her made us aware how little we know of a country so close to home.

Mongolia was the biggest contiguous (single land mass) empire in history, covering well over 9 million square miles at its peak in the 13th and 14th centuries. Of course, the one Mongolian name that we have all heard of is that of Genghis Khan — a name that arouses fear and awe in most readers of history. He was ruthless when it came to his empire. The nations he took over had two options: either submit to him or be slaughtered! Khan was a military and political genius, revered in Mongolia as a national hero and founding father, but he was also a bloodthirsty terror.

Apart from terrorising most of Mongolia's neighbouring nations, Genghis Khan did a lot for his people. He united the Mongol tribes and founded an empire. He created a legal code and the first 'postal system' in the world. Messages were carried swiftly on horseback from one place to another, enabling control and communication. Even travellers like Marco Polo used this service. Khan abolished the torture of prisoners but effectively used psychological warfare and speed in his conquests. He promoted meritocracy rather than class or ancestry. Thanks to the Silk Route that he established, cultural exchange between the East and the West was made possible.

Despite the incredible power and success of this national hero, Genghis Khan's final resting place remains a mystery to this day. Khan reportedly never wanted his body to be found. The statue of Genghis Khan riding a horse is the largest equestrian statue in the world. Standing at 130 feet, this enormous monument is made of stainless steel, and it towers over the Genghis Khan Statue Complex in the capital, Ulaanbaatar.



Mongolia has the Gobi desert in the south and high mountains in the west. Clear blue skies dominate the horizon. The climate is dry with barely any rain. Like Australia, it has some unique wildlife like the Siberian ibex, snow leopard, Gobi bear, and the wild bactrian camel (two humped). The Gobi desert is famous for its dinosaur fossil sites. The world first discovered dinosaur eggs there. Bogd Khan Uul National Park is the world's first national park and was established by the Mongolian government in 1778.

Mongolia had a peaceful revolution in 1990. Today, its Constitution supports a parliamentary republic. The system is partly presidential, but the president's powers are limited, and authority rests with parliament. Wedged between Russia and China, it is remarkable that Mongolia is ranked among the top 25% globally for its democratic system. Though the country covers about 1.5 million sq kms, the population is just 35 lakh. The Mongolian government gives medals and cash prizes to actively encourage having more children.

In Mongolia, ice cream is a common street snack in winter. The vendors do not need a freezer, as the temperature drops to minus 30 degrees celsius, they just need paper boxes! One legend has it that the Mongolian riders would carry milk in containers while on horseback, and the churning caused it to turn into ice cream!

Apart from Genghis Khan, the other fact inseparable from the Mongol identity is that this is predominantly a nomadic race, as comfortable on horseback as they are on the land. There are about as many horses in the country as people! More than a quarter of the total population is nomadic — historically, their dominant profession is herding and agriculture. The nomads live in tune with nature and move with their animals according to the seasons. Their yurts (tents) are open and welcoming to strangers. Apart from agriculture, the service sector and mining are major employers.

In Genghis Khan's time, the religion was a polytheistic one called Tengrism, which focused on the worship of the sky God, Tengri and on various other nature spirits. Genghis Khan himself was a Tengri worshipper, but he was also tolerant of other religions and curious to learn more about them.

After the empire fractured, three of the four main branches of the Mongol rulers converted to Islam, while the branch that went into China converted to Buddhism. Today, Mongolia's dominant religion is Buddhism.

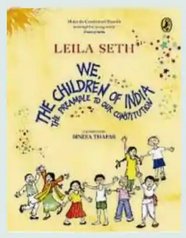
Fermented mare's milk (airag) is a popular drink (perhaps similar to our buttermilk?). Traditional cuisine has meat and dairy products.

The Naadam festival takes place every summer in all major cities in Mongolia. The most important sports events are archery, horse riding and wrestling, called the three sports of men. Women now also participate in the horse racing and archery events. The festival also includes traditional Mongolian music and dance. For locals, this is one of the most important social and sporting events of the year.

The Mughals were descendants of Genghis Khan on their mother's side. Babur's mother was a descendant of Genghis Khan, while his father was a descendant of Timur. It is probable that many people in India and across Asia are related to Genghis Khan through his genetic legacy — his Y chromosome is found in a significant number of Asian men today.

4 BOOKS ON THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

They explore different aspects of our country's supreme legal document

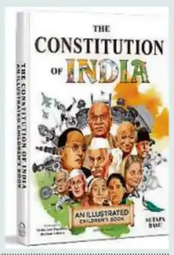


We, the Children of India (The Preamble to Our Constitution)

Author: Leila Seth

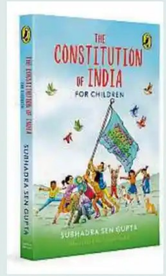
The book is written by Leila Seth, the first woman judge of the Delhi High Court and the first woman chief justice of a state High Court. It focuses on "We, the people...", the Preamble that is the introduction to the Constitution. It breaks down words children often hear on Republic Day but may not understand, such as sovereign, secular, and democratic republic, along with the core values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. The book explains these ideas through situations children can relate to, and emphasises the importance of fairness, respect, inclusion, and equality. Published by Puffin (Penguin India), it is supported by illustrations by Bindia Thapar.

The Constitution of India: An Illustrated Children's Book



Author: Sutapa Basu

Published by Wonder House Books, this book explains the basics of democracy, rights, responsibilities and citizenship in short, snippet-style writing, which young readers can follow without prior knowledge of the topics. It covers what it means to have rights, why laws exist, why equality is foundational to being a Republic, and how citizens are meant to be protected under the rule of law. It also introduces concepts like the tableaux seen during the Republic Day parade. The book is illustrated by Shalini Soni Mazumdar and Shubham Lakhera.



The Constitution of India for Children

Author: Subhadra Sen Gupta

Published by Puffin, this book is a friendly guide that helps children understand the Constitution as the backbone of how India functions. It explains what the Constitution is, why India needed it, and how it shapes democracy and citizenship. It also answers questions children often have, such as: Which languages is the Constitution written in? Were women part of the team that drafted it? Why do political parties have symbols next to their names? What is the official language of India? Through these questions and explanations, the book introduces young readers to the idea that the Constitution is not just a set of rules, but a safeguard meant to protect citizens, prevent unfairness, and define how decisions are made in a democracy.

Constitution Land: A Quest for Kids to Understand India's Preamble

Authors: Naincy and Adhishri Aruman

Written in a journey-style format to explain the Preamble, this book introduces children to the core ideals of the Republic — liberty, equality, justice and fraternity — and shows how these ideas are not just words, but principles that can guide everyday choices. It uses relatable examples, such as standing up to bullying or questioning unfair rules, to help young readers connect constitutional values to real life. The book is published by Indiepress/Westland.

POETS IN THE MAKING

Want to see your poetry in print?

Send in poems on the topic 'Special people in my life' to *Open Sesame*. You may be featured in an upcoming edition. Mail your work — not more than 12 lines — to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*. Entries close on February 5. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph.

Word of the Week

quack

(noun)
— a person who dishonestly pretends to have medical skills or knowledge

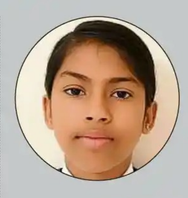
Usage:
— Dhruv advised Arjun to avoid going to the neighbourhood quack for his flu treatment.
— The self-proclaimed 'healer' turned out to be a quack.

A few joyful January moments

Open Sesame readers share their art

On January 3, *Open Sesame* asked its young readers to send in their artworks. Soon, we were flooded with entries from across the country. Many paintings were good, but we can only publish a few because of space constraints. Don't let that discourage you. Get creative and keep writing and painting, and stand a chance to be featured in an upcoming edition! Send your entries to: *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in*

KSHITHI, 8
Bengaluru, Karnataka



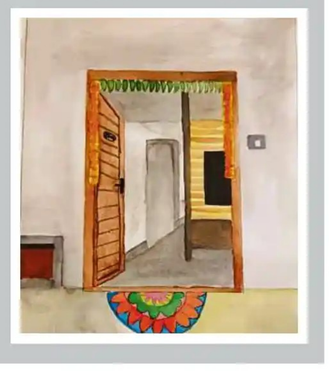
TANISHA HEGGADE A, 12
Bengaluru, Karnataka

LIANA CORNELEO, 10
Mangaluru, Karnataka

NISHANTH, 8
Bengaluru, Karnataka

JANANI KRISHNAN, 7
Bengaluru, Karnataka

VIBHA, 12
Bengaluru, Karnataka



This Week:

Same name

Take the fun Open Sesame quiz, and stand a chance to win gift vouchers worth Rs 500. Open to children below 16 years.

Q1 Born on January 19, 1736, James Watt is famed for the steam engine named after him. Who had developed an engine, as early as 1712, which Watt improved substantially, much later?

Q2 Explorer James Cook changed the name Stingray Harbour, which he had previously given an oceanic embayment. What did he rename it because of its 'great quantity of plants'?

Q3 James Bond features flamboyantly in films and fiction. Who portrays that suave secret-service agent, in 'Dr. No', the first cinematic adaptation of Ian Fleming's novel of that title?

Scan the QR code
Or visit **bit.ly/DHopensesame** to participate in the quiz.

Q4 **Rhyme Time:** Two clues to which the answers rhyme with each other.
Clue A: Novelist James Joyce wrote 'Finnegans –'.
Clue B: Sweet food made with a mixture of flour, eggs, fat and sugar.

Q5 **Clue Cluster:** In 1998, which James Cameron film won 11 Academy Awards?
Use these clues.
a) Iceberg
b) Rose
c) Lifeboats
d) Necklace

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: Anagha M (11), Bengaluru; Aarush Amareshgouda Malipatil (14), Dharwad; Tanvi Kolar (12), Kalaburagi.

LET'S DEBATE!

Want to take part in the upcoming *Open Sesame* debate? Share your thoughts in a crisp 200-word essay on the topic 'Should candy be banned?' Mail your works to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in.* Entries close on January 22. Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, school and city. And send us a recent photograph.

LETTER WRITING

Write an open letter to Subhas Chandra Bose

If you got the chance to have a conversation with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, whose birth anniversary is on January 23, what would you like to ask him, and what would you tell him about yourself? Write an open letter and share it with us. You stand a chance of being featured in an upcoming edition. Mail your work to *opensesame@deccanherald.co.in.* Open to children below 16 years. Don't forget to mention your name, age, and city, and send us a recent photograph. Entries close on January 29.

Stoic among the corpses

A Class 10 dropout, Vinu P assists the police in Kerala in recovering abandoned, decomposed and disfigured bodies. The work pays little and carries stigma, but he remains committed. DH journalist Arjun Raghunath meets him

Vinu P was just 15 when he jumped into a river to retrieve a body. It was a friend, and they had studied together until Class 8. The boy had gone swimming in the Periyar, Kerala's longest river, with two other children. A rescue team managed to pull the others out, but Vinu's friend vanished in the swirling waters. Two days later, when his body surfaced, rescuers asked the crowd gathered on the riverbank to help bring it ashore. Only Vinu stepped forward.

Now 40, Vinu does not remember what compelled him to act that day, or what he felt when he saw his friend's lifeless body. But the incident changed him. He stopped visiting temples, convinced he had seen "the truth of life". He lost his childhood fear of the dark. He knew what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. He dropped out after Class 10.

Over the past 25 years, Vinu has recovered over 3,000 bodies and personally buried about 2,500 of them — at his own expense. He works closely with the police, handling unclaimed or unidentified bodies, many of them decomposed or badly disfigured, and a majority of them suicides. He is not on the police payroll, but the authorities reimburse the costs involved in recovery and burial.

To make ends meet, Vinu offers ambulance services, and cleans homes where deaths have occurred. He has tried other gigs, including working as a lorry driver and bus conductor, but never stayed long. "I keep coming back to handling corpses," he says.

Aluva at a glance

Vinu lives on the outskirts of Kochi, in Aluva. The municipality is split by the Periyar. It is the headquarters of a major bank, the northern terminus of the Kochi Metro, and home to industries as well as migrant workers. The devout travel from afar to immerse ashes and honour their ancestors at the Mahadeva temple on the river's sandbanks. The town also houses an ashram founded by the anti-caste reformer Narayana Guru.

Police cite three reasons why unclaimed bodies are found in the region. The presence of many water bodies causes bodies from elsewhere to drift here. There is a growing population of migrants who are living away from families. Also, delayed recovery leaves bodies too decomposed to identify.

Finding Vinu's home is easy. He is widely known in Aluva, and the ambulances parked outside his house leave little doubt. "An elderly NRI woman donated these after reading about my work," he says, as we meet and start chatting. We move to the verandah for the interview, where he warns that he may have to leave any moment if the police call.

He picks up two or three bodies every week. The deaths are mostly caused by drowning, and train and road accidents. He has also handled poisoning deaths, and retrieved bodies found hanging, from inside homes or from trees.

For Vinu, giving a stranger a decent funeral is "great service". He treats everybody with the same care he would give his family. Since burial space for the unclaimed is hard to come by, his life's dream is to create a separate burial ground for them.

Stigma and support

In January 2001, Aluva was shaken by the brutal murder of six members of the Manjooran family, including an elderly woman and two children. Their house stood near Vinu's school, and he watched the investigators carry the bodies out. It was the first time he had seen a corpse. His friend's drowning followed roughly six months later. A month after that, a man died in a road accident near his school.

"No one dared to touch him, but I volunteered to shift the body into the ambulance. My uniform was stained with blood. One of my teachers gave me Rs 10 in appreciation," he recalls.

Handling corpses in India is often seen as a caste-based occupation, but Vinu insists this is not the case in Aluva. The six corpse collectors who mentored him early on took up the work because they had no other options. But Vinu does it by choice.

His parents initially opposed his work, but over time they have made their peace with it. But it has come at a cost. They are sometimes insulted and labelled parents of a 'shavam vari' (corpse picker in Malayalam). They are rarely invited to social gatherings. Vinu has few friends and often eats alone, as people are averse to his work. But he says he "understands". His first marriage ended because his wife was uncomfortable with his occupation.

However, his current wife, Bincy, finds his work noble, "something not everyone can do". The two met while she was working as a nursing assistant with an ambulance service. But her family has not warmed to the relationship.

Bincy blames films for portraying corpse handlers poorly, "as drunkards". Vinu says they may have a point: "People who come to assist me first ask for liquor." He smokes but does not drink.

The local police, however, view him as a partner in their work, and have given him the informal title of 'Corpse Taker' for his services. Manuraj G P, inspector at the Aluva East police station, praises Vinu for his expertise, his ready availability, and his willingness to handle the most morbid cases without greed.

To Vinu, the police are "good friends". The local police, railway police, and fire and rescue department reimburse his expenses, and often support his family with groceries or clothes. The police have also helped him find homes more than once. The house he currently rents had been abandoned after two former tenants died by suicide there. The police spoke to the owner about Vinu's good deeds, and that is how he came to live there.

DH ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

Last rites

Vinu says the putrid smell of rotting bodies does not bother him. Oddly, it is the perfume and incense sticks that investigators sometimes use to mask the stench that he finds unpleasant. The sight of dismembered, bleeding or swollen bodies does not unsettle him either. Vinu does not dwell on the meaning of life and death. Has constant exposure to death numbed his emotions? He dismisses the assumption: "I am a Class 10 dropout. I don't have the ability to philosophise much."

But does he ever think about the people behind the bodies he recovers — what they were like, what their aspirations were, what hardships they were facing? "I recover the body and hand it over to the police. I don't ask about such things. They have placed a lot of faith in my work, and I don't want to cross the boundary," he says.

Yet, with a little probing, he begins to outline some incidents that have stayed with him.

Several years ago, he handled the corpse of a heavily pregnant woman who had been run over by a train. The impact was so severe that the foetus was flung out of her womb. "It haunts me even now. Maybe because I love kids," he says, caressing his three-year-old son, Varshit.

Vinu has buried around 2,500 unclaimed bodies, and only once has a body been exhumed. The case involved a young woman from Goa. Six months after her burial, her relatives arrived searching for her. A DNA test later, the mortal remains were handed over, and the family collapsed in grief.

More recently, he handled a highly decomposed body found in a marshland. It is believed to be that of a 59-year-old man from Bengaluru who had gone missing after being deported from Kuwait. The remains are still in the mortuary, awaiting DNA confirmation.

Vinu says if a body remains unclaimed for five days, it is buried. But how is the religion of the deceased determined, and the last rites chosen? Vinu says burial is the standard procedure because it allows for exhumation if needed.

This brings to his mind the case of a Muslim migrant worker from West Bengal who had drowned near Munambam in Kochi. His family requested that he be laid to rest according to their religious customs. With little money, they struggled to find a burial space. So Vinu approached mosques on their behalf. Some refused, others demanded money. Eventually, a post on social media detailing the plight of the family turned things around. A mosque agreed to conduct the burial, and even those who had earlier declined offered to help. "The family was very grateful," he says.

Rs 6,000 for a life

On a few occasions, Vinu has arrived in time and saved lives. Once, while retrieving a corpse floating in the Periyar, he realised the body was still warm.

He alerted the police, and the person was rushed to hospital. "It was a miracle that the man survived. He had been in the water overnight," he recalls.

The story did not end there. The man was later billed Rs 6,000 by the hospital. But he had no money on him; he even tried to escape to avoid paying. Hospital staff eventually called Vinu, asking him to settle the bill. "The man told me he had tried to end his life because he was penniless, and asked me to pay because I was the one who saved him," he shares. Vinu borrowed and paid up.

Most suicide cases he has handled involve men in their 40s and 50s, or people dejected in relationships. He has also noticed how public action varies by circumstance. "In road accidents, people are less hesitant to approach the body. But with train or drowning cases, they assume suicide and keep their distance," he says.

On one occasion, late at night, railway officials called him to search for a body reportedly hit by a train. When he reached the tracks, he found a man lying there alive. Vinu asked if he had seen anyone struck by the train. "He said it was him and asked me to look at his left side. The man was bleeding heavily. His left hand had been severed," he recalls. His life was saved, but not his limb.

Named in a note

Vinu's pride in his work has come from unexpected places. Once his name appeared on a suicide note. A bus conductor was found hanging in his home, his body already decomposing. At the end of the note, he had written: 'I know Vinu will take my body.' The man was among the few colleagues from his bus conductor days who respected his work.

Another time, when he recovered the body of an influential man, someone in the crowd remarked that "dirty people" like Vinu should not touch such bodies. But the man's son defended him, saying only Vinu was willing to retrieve his father from the filthy canal. For Vinu, however, the greatest pride is that he is allowed to enter restricted areas like crime scenes to assist the police and forensic teams.

His expertise is sought after well beyond Aluva. Over a decade ago, he travelled nearly 110 km to Munnar to recover the bodies of two couples who had fallen into a gorge. The cold weather made the task especially exhausting. And during the devastating 2018 Kerala floods, he was called in to clear the carcasses of cattle that had drowned.

In 2024, Vinu co-authored his autobiography in Malayalam, 'Maranakkoott: Oru Savamvariyude Athmakatha', with journalist Niyas Kareem. The book was recently translated into English by Ministhy S as 'The Corpse Collector' (Juggernaut Books).

Nothing to hide

Vinu scrolls through his phone gallery, showing me videos of corpses he has recovered. "These serve as proof that no damage was done to the body and that nothing on it was taken away," he explains. His son climbs onto a chair to see what we are watching. I suggest that he hide such images from the child. Vinu shakes his head and says, "Every child should know what their parents do."

An ambulance siren interrupts our conversation. It is his phone ringtone, his wife tells me. Vinu steps into an adjoining room, where "no one else is allowed". This is where he stores body bags, gloves, masks, ropes, and bundles of notebooks. He records unclaimed cases in these books — who reported the incident, where the body was found, identification marks, and details about the burial site.

There seems to be an emergency at the railway station and Vinu is now issuing instructions to one of his ambulance drivers to get there. He returns for the interview and tells me that a few days before my visit, he had brought down the body of a man found hanging from a tall tree. His job is physically demanding, and involves constant risk. At times, he jumps into cold water in the dead of the night to recover bodies. "On some occasions, I have lost my balance in the water and nearly drowned, but others helped me in time," he recalls. At other times, he climbs electric poles and towers, enters wells and pits, or wades into marshy land where broken glass and other sharp debris often lie hidden beneath the slush. The most dangerous operation he recalls took place many years ago in Thiruvananthapuram, when he entered a large metal pipe to retrieve the body of a worker who had died after getting trapped inside. Before crawling inside, an ointment was applied to his body to protect his skin from cuts and abrasions, and oxygen tubes were arranged in case he struggled to breathe. "But I handle every corpse with my hands. I don't pull or drag them with ropes or sticks. I find that disrespectful," he says.

His phone rings again and this time, he returns to tell me that he is leaving for Varappuzha, 16 km away. The police have called him to a mortuary to assist with the decomposed body of a man he had recovered from a river the previous day. The 60-year-old was estranged from his wife and lived alone.

Like this story?
Email: dhonsat@deccanherald.co.in

MUSICANA

Naga artiste wants her songs to find new ears in B'luru

Temsu Clover blends blues, R&B, pop and jazz, writes Shraddha A K

When Nagaland-based singer-songwriter Temsu Clover (Temsukala Lemtor) stepped on stage at BLR Hubba on Friday, it marked her long-awaited debut in Bengaluru — a city she has always wanted to perform in. Though this was only her second visit, the connection felt "instinctive". For Temsu, performing in a new city is like beginning a conversation with strangers. "Finally, my songs get to find new ears and new interpretations here," she said.

Temsu's music resists easy categorisation, drawing from blues, R&B, pop, and jazz. Her sound has evolved less through design and more through instinct. Growing up listening to a wide range of music, she learned to follow emotion rather than structure. "When I create, I don't think about genre. I follow the music," she stated.

Her roots in Nagaland play a vital role in shaping that sensibility. Music is woven into everyday life there. "Every household has a guitarist or a singer," Temsu noted. Though her songs may not explicitly address identity, her journey carries the weight of being seen and heard from a region often underrepresented in the mainstream.

The 27-year-old artiste has released eight singles and one album to date, with most of her music centred on themes of emotions and life. Her single 'Lost in my own town' explores the struggle of trying to find one's way while also accepting oneself in the process. She listens to various artistes, including BiBi, Lee Hi, and Laufey, drawn to the honesty and boldness in their songwriting.

Her single 'Don't wanna be' features a minimal indie-pop style beat. The combination of her vocals with soft progressive beats creates a sound that is characteristic of Temsu's style. Over time, Temsu's songwriting has grown more restrained and intentional. Early on, she tried to say everything at once. Now, she values "saying less, but meaning more".

As a storyteller, Temsu experiences different formats in distinct ways. Singles feel cinematic — self-contained moments — while albums unfold like longer series or seasons. Live performance remains central to that journey. Playing with her band — Imti Imchen on bass, Nungsang Kichu on guitar, Imli on drums, and E Pat on keys — transforms her music into something collective. Long a childhood dream, being in a band has reshaped how her songs breathe on stage. "The music becomes less about me and more about the feeling in the room," she explains.

Looking ahead, she envisions a legacy rooted in honesty and longevity, while opening space for artistes from the north-east to exist without compromise. "There's space for our voices exactly as they are," she says.

Temsu Clover has released eight singles and one album to date.

BURNT SCREENS, BANNED VOICES

Cinema under siege in Iran

Filmmakers have survived the Islamic Revolution, state restrictions, and exile, but in recent years, a fatigue has crept into their work, writes Vivekananda Kodandaraman

'Film industry on deathbed' read the headline in the Iranian newspaper *Kayhan*, following the burning down of cinema halls in 1978 during the Iranian Revolution. The history of the Revolution — the term refers to the overthrowing of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1979 — cannot be separated from the cinema of Iran. The country is witnessing another uprising now.

Many documentaries show what happened to cinema across the country in the '70s. 'Blames and Flames' (2012) by Mohammadreza Farzad shows how, in 1978, four cinema halls were burnt down in six days in Tehran (more than 130 cinemas burned down across Iran). The film shows how people took to the streets with handheld cameras recording the protests. The director says, "People were filming each other; they had become each other's directors."

Shahram Mokri's 2020 film, 'Careless Crime' (2020), was made based on one of those theatres — Cinema Rex in Abadan — that were burnt.

Among the many film personalities living in exile is Golshifteh Farahani, who was banned from working in Iranian films after she made a public appearance without a hijab.

The early '70s was marked by the Iranian New Wave. In the wake of Islamic revolution of '79, New Wave films and pre-revolution films were banned as they did not conform to the strict censorship codes imposed after the Revolution.

'Tall Shadows of the Wind' (1979) by Bahman Farmanara was made at the end of the Shah's rule and is a metaphorical take on power relations. The film shows people erecting a scarecrow for protection and how it multiplies and terrorises them.

Nothing much has changed since the '70s, and filmmakers have been vocal about their problems. Asghar Farhadi, known for 'A Separation' (2011), the first Iranian film to win an Oscar, says, "I try to avoid writing scenes involving physical contact between men and women because they are impossible to film. However, when it's a scene about a conflict, like someone falling over or a fight, it can't be avoided."

In a scene in 'About Elly' (2009), he was asked to remove a fight scene that involved physical contact with a woman, but he urged the censor board to watch it again and brought to their attention that it was a continuous shot and any cuts would ruin the scene. He managed to convince them.

Shahram Mokri's 'Careless Crime' (2020) is based on the real-life story of Cinema Rex, set on fire in 1978 by four Islamic extremists.

Well-known actor Golshifteh Farahani, who plays a prominent role in the film, has been in exile for many years. She was banned from working in Iranian films after she appeared in a Hollywood film and made a public appearance without wearing a hijab. She is among the mainstream actors vocal about injustices against women in Iran.

One of the most important films from the New Wave was Parviz Sayyad's 'Dead End' (1977). Iranian cinema historian Hamid Naficy writes: "The title refers not only to the alley in which the heroine lives but also to the dead-end lives of women and others." Similar themes have been explored by filmmakers over the years. The animated film 'Persepolis' (2007), written and directed by Marjane Satrapi, is a coming-of-age story of a young girl against the background of the Iranian Revolution. Jafar Panahi's 'The Circle' (2000) deals with the condition of women in contemporary Iran.

Underground music

The Revolution also affected musicians in the country. 'No One Knows About Persian Cats' (2009) talks about Iran's underground rock scene. The film follows two young musicians, just released from prison, travelling across Tehran as they form a band and prepare to leave Iran. When the Iranian-Kurdish director Bahman Ghobadi, who made the film, was asked about going back to Iran, he said, "Technically I could go back, but I choose not to because there are only two options left: one, a real jail, and two, being imprisoned at home and not being able to get any permits for making films."

Many prominent filmmakers have faced arrest or gone into exile. Mohsen Makhmalbaf, who lives in Paris, once said, "I have hoisted the Iranian flag 140 times at international film festivals, but I have been attacked and humiliated 140,000 times at home."

'Blames & Flames' shows how people took to the streets with handheld cameras recording the protests.

Filmmakers who remain in Iran make films under strict censorship. Most of these films are not screened domestically but go on to win critical acclaim at film festivals around the world. Filmmakers are mostly unable to attend these festivals due to travel bans imposed on them. Jafar Panahi attended the Cannes Film Festival in 2025 for the first time in 20 years — a period during which many of his films were screened and discussed there. He won the Palme d'Or for his latest film, 'It Was Just an Accident', which explores the trauma of political imprisonment.

Iranian films have always been film festival favourites, but filmmakers in the past and present have said that they would like the people of Iran to see the films they make. Iranian movie screenings attract long queues at the festivals. It is a popular belief that the cinema of Iran will not disappoint. However, there has been a decline in the number of Iranian films being screened at film festivals of late.

Cinephiles are losing interest because of the redundancy in the narratives. Bahman Ghobadi, in an interview said, "The films that are shown in Iran are the ones the government approves of. Everything should go through the government pipeline. If you see now, Iranian cinema is suffering from redundancy because everybody is forced to take the same route."

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to dhonsat @deccanherald.co.in

'Classify, don't CENSOR'

With film certification being used as a political tool, the need to redefine certification guidelines is greater than ever before, writes Pranati A S

Film censorship woes resurface every once in a while in India. Indian cinema has seen two major changes post 2014 — a rise in propaganda films supporting the ruling BJP's ideology, and severe censorship or banning of movies that are critical of the BJP-led government and groups like the RSS, or for 'hurting Hindu religious sentiments'. The last time movies went through this kind of censorship was during Emergency, when films were targeted for political dissent and any content seen as undermining the regime.

The latest movies to fall into trouble are Vijay's 'Jana Nayagan' and Sivakarthikeyan's 'Parashakti'. Both the films have faced trouble from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and the intent is evidently 'political'. 'Parashakti', a fictional retelling of the anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu during the 1960s, faced 25-odd cuts from the board.

While 'Parashakti' heeded the CBFC's recommendations and released the movie, the fate of 'Jana Nayagan' is yet to be decided by the Madras High Court. The movie, purported to be Vijay's swan song — before he enters politics — is said to be a three-hour promotion for the actor's political career. It is speculated that the BJP wants Vijay to join the BJP-alliance in the upcoming April elections.

Role of certification board

The modifications document of 'Parashakti', accessed by *Showtime*, showed objections to dialogues like, 'let the fire spread', 'Hindi erased my dream', 'anti national scum' and to visuals of cow dung being applied on a post office sign board among others.

In countries like the US, the certification board reviews a film and classifies it for a particular audience — G, PG, PG-13, R, and NC-17. However, the CBFC functions as a censor board, with the ruling parties often using it to their benefit.

Film educator and critic, Basav Biradar, says that the only function of a film certification board is to decide the level of certification for the audience viewing the film. "A film certification board should ideally not be asking for cuts in a film. Unfortunately, in India, it has extended to censorship. However, if the filmmaker wants the certification to be changed — from adult only to PG-13 for example — then the board can recommend cuts to make the film ready for that particular level of certification," he shares.

Cuts to bans

The CBFC, in recent times, has also faced backlash for demanding silly, unnecessary cuts from foreign filmmakers — especially blurring the 'Superman' kiss, when Indian movies with far more vulgar scenes are just classified as U/A. 'The Apprentice', a biopic of Donald Trump was blocked from exhibition in India after the director, Ali Abbasi, refused to make cuts demanded by the CBFC. "I ran away from Iranian censorship only to meet corporate censorship in the US. Now India. Really? Censorship seems to be an epidemic at the moment," Abbasi was quoted as saying by *The Guardian*.

Sivakarthikeyan's 'Parashakti' (in pic) and Vijay's 'Jana Nayagan' are among the most recent films to run into CBFC hurdles.

"In India, the film certification board and the law enforcement bodies collaborate and then ban a film. The banning of film can happen only through the law enforcement body and not a film certification board, says Biradar. Director Honey Trehan's 'Panjab '95' — about human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra who was abducted and murdered by the Punjab police for exposing police atrocities in the state — is a recent example. The film has faced over 128 cuts from the CBFC. Among the many cuts demanded by the CBFC is 'Punjab police'. The makers went to court but were reportedly pressured to withdraw their case, leaving the film's release in a state of limbo. Amandeep Sandhu, whose book 'Panjab: Journeys Through Fault Lines', inspired the film, says, "The film has run into trouble because the police officer who was involved in Khalra's abduction and murder was regarded as the 'supercop who saved Punjab from terrorism'. And the BJP is the champion of police in India."

Lawrence Liang, lawyer and legal researcher, says that the Cinematograph Act allows the CBFC to suggest cuts, making it more like a censor body. The language of the Cinematograph Act is so broad that anything can be made out of it. "It replicates the wide language of article 19 (2) and determines that 'A film shall not be certified for public exhibition if, the film or any part of it is against the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or involves defamation or contempt of court or is likely to incite the commission of any offence'. This provides extremely wide discretionary powers that can be utilised by governments towards political ends," he shares.

For example, the 2023 two-part BBC documentary 'India: The Modi Question' was banned by the government of India. Kanchan Gupta, senior advisor of ministry of information and broadcasting shared a tweet stating that the documentary was found to be "undermining the sovereignty and integrity of India".

Earlier this week, veteran actor and politician Kamal Haasan called for a "principled relook at the certification process". In an open letter, the actor called for "defined timelines for certification, transparent evaluation and written, reasoned justification for every suggested cut or edit".

But, how will it be more transparent when the recruitments are made by the ruling political parties? Biradar believes that the only way the process can be free of political control is if the board has complete freedom and there is no pressure or influence of the government or the ruling party, to appoint its personnel. "The appointed personnel should also be sure that there are no repercussions for them if they do not toe the party line," he adds.

MOVIE REVIEWS

Green light for silly but fun series on smuggling

RASHMI VASUDEVA

★★☆☆☆

Taskaree: The Smuggler's Web

Hindi (Netflix)

Directors: Raghav Jairath, Neeraj Pandey

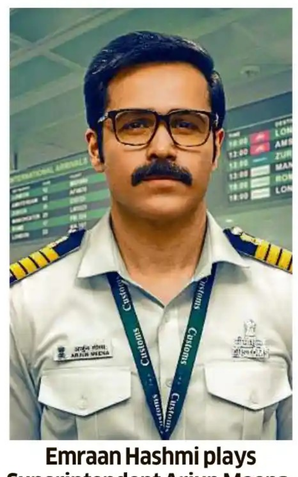
Cast: Emraan Hashmi, Anurag Sinha, Amruta Khanvilkar

Netflix's 'Taskaree: The Smuggler's Web' calls to mind a Bollywood of a certain vintage, when watching a film was a pleasurable experience, the admittedly convoluted plot somehow held together, and everyone on screen (and in the audience) happily suspended disbelief for the sheer fun of it.

It also marks a refreshing detour. Here, the much-ignored and frequently vilified customs officers are the heroes. They hustle through airport corridors, sniffing out exotic monkeys sedated and hidden in coat pockets, heroin capsules lodged in distended stomachs, and designer suitcases fitted with gold-plated wheels. It's busy, absurd, and oddly delightful.

The plot itself is fairly simple. A squad of unsung, "hungry and honest" officers, led by Superintendent Arjun Meena (Emraan Hashmi), sets out to outwit a global smuggling syndicate run by Bada Chaudhary (Sharad Kelkar). Chaudhary, meanwhile, is sitting pretty, playing murderous golf (you'll know what we mean) and enjoying a blissful family life with his wife and son at a sprawling estate on the banks of Lake Como, no less.

Although the story hops from Milan to Bangkok to Al-Dera, the real drama unfolds not in these glossy cities but at the Green, sorry, Red Channel.



Emraan Hashmi plays Superintendent Arjun Meena.

There is considerable attention to detail, and initially it's fascinating to watch the inventive methods couriers use to beat the system. By the fifth episode, however, the repetition sets in, dulling the pace and making the series less racy than it could have been. The performances are earnest, and the makers' sincerity shines through. Taskaree is far from faultless — it has its loopholes, and that finale is undeniably silly and overcooked. And yet, somehow, it remains watchable.

Underwhelming stab at Christie classic

RASHMI RAJAGOPAL

Mia McKenna-Bruce plays Lady Eileen Brent.

★★★☆☆

Agatha Christie's Seven Dials

English (Netflix)

Creator: Chris Chibnall

Cast: Mia McKenna-Bruce, Martin Freeman, Helena Bonham Carter

England, 1925. Gerry Wade is found dead in his bed, an empty bottle of sleeping draught at his bedside. But his close friend Lady Eileen 'Bundle' Brent (Mia McKenna-Bruce) is not convinced it is suicide. Her suspicions are confirmed after the murder of Wade's friend, Ronny Devereux, not much later. At the heart of this cosy murder mystery is a highly valuable formula for a metal that is indestructible.

As Eileen, an amateur sleuth, runs around attempting to uncover the identity of the murderer, the narrative begins to feel stale, predictable and downright dull.

I found myself waiting for the plot to thicken, as is expected of an Agatha Christie mystery. Spoiler alert: It never really does. The identity of the orchestrator of the murders is so shocking, it is ridiculous. It gets even more dubious when the reason for the individual's crimes is revealed.

An Agatha Christie mystery is treasured for its intelligent plotlines and restraint. As a reader who grew up on the author's brilliant books, the three-part series came across as underwhelming and somehow over-the-top at the same time. It deviates from the original in many ways — among them a dramatic train scene involving gunwielding murder suspects, a dead father and a different culprit. The dramatic climax is contrived and inauthentic.

Mia McKenna-Bruce as Lady Eileen feels too modern, out of place and vanilla. Nothing about her character or the way she carries herself reflects the time she lives in. We also never really get a sense of her personality beyond her interest in solving the murder of her friend.

I do think it is enjoyable if not viewed as an Agatha Christie mystery — laidback entertainment where nothing really stands out save for the performances of Helena Bonham Carter (who plays Eileen's mother) and Martin Freeman (superintendent Battle).

Bittersweet ending ties up loose strings of show

SHRADDHA A K

★★★★½

Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale

English (Jio Hotstar)

Director: Simon Curtis

Cast: Hugh Bonneville, Laura Carmichael, Michelle Dockery, Jim Carter

This is the third and final movie based on the popular British series 'Downton Abbey', which consists of 52 episodes across six seasons. The plot picks up from where the second movie, 'Downton Abbey: A New Era', left off. It follows the Crawley family as they navigate a public scandal, including Mary Crawley's (Michelle Dockery) divorce, and the grief stemming from the death of Violet Crawley, played by Maggie Smith. The family also seeks to keep Downton Abbey running despite their dwindling funds.

The movie features fan-favourite characters returning to the screen for the last time, such as Thomas Barrow (Rob James-Collier) and Tom Branson (Allen Leech). The script is infused with themes of farewell, providing each character with a proper ending that leaves the audience both teary-eyed and at peace, knowing that they have all grown beyond their individual challenges.

Carmichael and Dockery in the film's final scene.

Furthermore, the film showcases how each character adapts to the changes of time, particularly in light of their strong ties to tradition. This includes experiences of retirement, relocation, and the passing of responsibilities to the next generation. The film also pays tribute to actress Maggie Smith through her character, Violet Crawley.

As with all period pieces, the movie captivates viewers with the beautiful gowns and tiaras, as well as stunning cinematography.

Saying goodbye, both in reality and in fiction, can be challenging. However, everything must come to an end. The concluding chapter of 'Downton Abbey' tugs at the heartstrings with its poignant farewells, as characters embark on their own paths, pursuing independent lives and dreams.

Shreyas Iyer

Bishnoi, Iyer added to T20I squad against NZ

NEW DELHI, PTI: Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi was on Friday added to India's T20I squad for the five-match series against New Zealand in place of injured all-rounder Washington Sundar, who will miss the rubber starting January 21 in Nagpur.

Seasoned batter Shreyas Iyer too has been drafted in for the first three T20Is against the Kiwis after Tilak Varma was ruled out because of a side strain.

"The all-rounder (Washington) has been ruled out of the upcoming IDFC First Bank T20I series against New Zealand. The Men's Selection Committee has named Ravi Bishnoi as his replacement," the BCCI said in a release.

Bishnoi has taken 61 wickets from 42 T20Is, and the last of which came against England in February 2025.

"Washington Sundar underwent scans after reporting an acute onset discomfort in his lower rib area while bowling during the first ODI against New Zealand at the BCA Stadium, Vadodara, on 11 January," the BCCI added.

Washington will now head to the BCCI Centre of Excellence for recuperation.

"This was followed by an in-person consultation with an expert. He has been diagnosed with a side strain and has been advised rest for a few days, following which he will report to the BCCI Centre of Excellence (COE) for further management of his injury," the press release added.

Updated T20I squad: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (WK), Shreyas Iyer (first three T20Is), Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel (VC), Rinku Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakaravarthy, Ishan Kishan (WK), Ravi Bishnoi.

Karnataka crash out in quarters

BENGALURU, DHNS: A listless Karnataka were shown the exit door as an all-round Maharashtra romped home to a six-wicket victory and booked their semifinal berth in the BCCI Women's under-15 One-day trophy at the CAP Ground 2 in Puducherry on Friday.

Having called it right at the toss and opting to bat first, Karnataka were bowled out for a mere 85 in 34.3 overs, with No. 7 Kashvi S Shekar top-scoring with 16.

For Maharashtra, Rashi Vyas (3/11) and Krishna Sagare (3/12) produced a brilliant bowling show.

Chasing 86 for a spot in the last four, Niheera Sharma (53 not out) scored a brisk unbeaten half-century, wrapping the chase in 24.3 overs.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 85 all out in 34.3 overs (Arya Jambhulkar 2-18, Krishna Sagare 3-12, Rashi Vyas 3-11) lt to Maharashtra: 87/4 in 24.3 overs (Niheera Sharma 53 n.o.).

Meropi for Calcutta Champions

KOLKATA SELECTIONS

Aashay Doctor-trained Meropi, to be ridden by Trevor Patel, and Black Eagle, to be piloted by Vishal Bunde and from the stables of Rajender Reddy, are likely to dominate the finish in the small field of four runners in the fray for the Calcutta Champions Sprint Trophy, the feature event on Saturday. The first race starts ar 1:30 pm.

1. Cavalry Cup - 2000M: Rihgteous 1, Dubai Prince 2, Hermes 3.
2. Bengal Area Cup - 1100M: Victoria Cross 1, Dona Sienna 2, Chililady 3.
3. Army Service Corps (ASC) Cup - 1400M: Anigraha 1, Blue God 2, Fable 3.
4. Eastern Command Cup - 1400M: Shine 1, Pantazi 2, Ghirardelli 3.
5. Calcutta Champions Sprint Trophy - 1200M: Meropi 1, Black Eagle 2.
6. Lt Gen Jameel Mahmood Memorial Cup (Div I) - 1200M: Surprise Fantasy 1, Cashmere Silk 2, Marcolini 3.
7. Lt Gen Jameel Mahmood Memoria Cup (Div II) - 1200M: Most And More 1, Spirit Bay 2, Mi Arion 3.
Day's best: Shine. **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7. **I treble:** 2, 3 & 4. **II treble:** 5, 6 & 7.

Sania points to systemic gaps in Indian tennis set-up

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Tennis is early into its 2026 season, and the the Australian Open is just around the corner. To the never-ending disappointment of Indian fans, there will be no Indian representation in the singles draw once again, but Yuki Bhambri and Niki Poonacha will separately compete in the men's doubles.

Unfortunately, there will be no women's player in action in the women's and mixed doubles, once again reminding the fans of the void left by Sania Mirza. The six-time Grand Slam winner shared her thoughts on the sorry state of Indian tennis during an interaction with select media outlets. Below are the excerpts.

Sania Mirza

So, what is your most memorable moment from the Australian Open?

I have been very fortunate to have very special memories at the Australian Open. Because a lot of my firsts came at the Australian Open, but a lot of my lasts also came there. But it's very hard for me to pick because I have won grand slams. But for me, the most special memory where everything began and happened was when I played Serena Williams in 2005. I think that was the beginning of me and everything that followed after that.

Can you tell us a bit about the non-participation of Indian players in a big circuit like the Grand Slams?

I think that it's been coming for a while, right? This is not the first time that this has happened over the last couple of years. Because we did have Sumit (Nagal) over the last few years. I am talking about singles, obviously. But after he (Sumit) had a certain amount of injuries and stuff, he kind of dropped out of that block. And then it got really, really tough. So, it is very unfortunate, but it's not surprising, per se. Because players are not born overnight. There are things that happen, and things have to fall into place. And it takes generational hard work, commitment and systems to have players come out at the highest level of any global sport year after year.

What do you feel is the reason behind India not being able to find a big tennis player in the country? Especially when we have more facilities than before?

It's not so simple for players to come to Grand Slams overnight and I don't know what the facilities are. From what I see, there is no system where we fall back and say, we follow this system. All the big names of Indian tennis have all come out of not a system. We have come out individually. And it still remains the same.

Watch Australian Open 2026 starting from 18th January, 2026 live and exclusive on Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD), Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD) , Sony Sports Ten 3 Hindi (SD & HD), Sony Sports Ten 4 Tamil & Sony Sports Ten 4 Telugu channels.

CRICKET WPL

Shreyanka routs GG after Richa-Radha rescue act

Challengers post third consecutive victory to remain top of the table

NAVI MUMBAI, PTI

Royal Challengers Bengaluru rode on a century partnership between Radha Yadav and Richa Ghosh before off-spinner Shreyanka Patil produced a magical five-wicket haul to beat Gujarat Giants by 32 runs and register their third consecutive win to remain top of the table in the Women's Premier League here on Friday.

Yadav (66 runs off 47 balls) and Ghosh (44 off 28) shared 105 runs in 11 overs for the fifth wicket to take RCB to a competitive 182 for 7 after being asked to bat.

In reply, Gujarat Giants lost wickets at regular intervals and were bowled out for 150, with Patil ruling the roost with amazing figures of 5 for 23.

RCB's Radha Yadav (left) and Richa Ghosh forged a 105-run stand for the fifth wicket after the top order collapsed to 43/4 against Gujarat Giants in Navi Mumbai. PTI

GG started their chase with Beth Mooney (27) flicking Lauren Bell (3/29) for a boundary off the opening ball, while Sophie Devine was not to be left behind, smashing Linsey Smith for two boundaries in the next over.

Mooney was at her attacking best, clobbering Bell over mid-off for a maximum before striking the bowler for two consecutive fours off the final two balls of the over to keep GG moving forward.

RCB struck first blood in the next over when Devine was caught and bowled by Arundhati Reddy. Patil then dealt a severe blow to GG by dismissing Mooney, who was trapped LBW. GG suffered another setback when skipper Ashleigh Gardner was caught by Richa Ghosh off Bell.

Next batter Kanika Ahuja (16) showed the willingness to fight with back-to-back fours before falling LBW to Patil. Wickets continued to tumble for GG at regular intervals, with Georgia Wareham the next to depart as the scoreboard read 70 for 5.

Bharti Fulmali (39 off 20 balls) was the top-scorer for GG but it was not enough.

Earlier sent in to bat, RCB made an aggressive start with Grace Harris clobbering four boundaries off pacer Renuka Singh to pick 23 runs in the first over.

But Harris's innings was cut short by right-arm pacer Kashvee Gautam, who trapped the batter plumb in front of the wicket with a perfect inswinger.

Gautam struck again in her next over removing D Hemalatha, caught by debutant Shivani Singh.

After being clobbered in the opening over, Renuka came back strongly to pick up the vital wicket of RCB skipper Smriti Mandhana, who was brilliantly caught by Rajeshwari Gayakwad with a diving forward effort in the fifth over.

RCB continued to lose wickets as Gautami Naik was the next to depart, LBW to Devine (3/31) as the Bengaluru outfit slumped to 43 for 4 in the sixth overs.

Australian leg-spinner Georgia Wareham was then taken to task by Radha Yadav, who first hit a much-needed boundary through point before dispatching the ball over long-on for a maximum.

Ghosh and Yadav then came together at the crease, playing cautiously for an over before the latter hammered Wareham for a boundary and a maximum off consecutive deliveries.

While Yadav was more aggressive of the two, Ghosh too picked up pace with a few boundaries to keep RCB's scoreboard ticking.

Ghosh, dropped at deep mid-off by Gautam in the 13th over, utilised the 'life' by clobbering Wareham over deep mid-wicket.

Ghosh sent a Sophie Devine delivery flying over the long-off boundary.

Brief scores: RCB 182/7 in 20 overs (Radha Yadav 66, Richa Ghosh 44, Nadine de Klerk 26 n.o.; Kashvee Gautam 2-42, Sophie Devine 3-31) bt Gujarat Giants 150 all out in 18.5 overs (Beth Mooney 27, Bharti Fulmali 39; Lauren Bell 3-29, Shreyanka Patil 5-23).
PoM: Radha Yadav.

Warriorz face Mumbai

Having finally got the monkey off their backs with the season's first win in their fourth attempt, UP Warriorz will enter the Women's Premier League match against Mumbai Indians with a spring in their step here on Saturday, reports PTI from Navi Mumbai.

Winless in the first three outings, the Warriorz opened their account on Thursday, beating defending champions Mumbai Indians by seven wickets, and they are set to face each other for the second time in three days.

The Warriorz though still need to figure out their batting order with opener Kiran Navgire falling for a low score for the fourth time.

RCB offer to install Rs 4.5 cr cameras for crowd control

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Royal Challengers Bengaluru have proposed the installation of 300-350 AI-enabled cameras at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium and offered to bear the one-time estimated cost of Rs 4.50 crore for better crowd management.

The curious development comes in the backdrop of RCB reportedly shifting their home matches to Mumbai and Raipur amid a delay by the state government in granting permission to host matches at Chinnaswamy.

In a communication to the Karnataka State Cricket Association on Friday, the franchise said that the advanced surveillance technology will assist the KSCA and law enforcement agencies in efficiently managing crowd movement, ensuring disciplined queueing, monitoring unauthorised access through real-time tracking of entries and exits, and significantly enhancing overall fan safety.

"The solution leverages advanced analysis of video, audio and text data to accelerate investigations and enable faster, more accurate decision-making. Its real-time AI video analytics capability enables early detection of incidents such as violence, unauthorised access and intrusion, facilitating swift and effective law-enforcement response," the statement said.

The association is evaluating the draft proposal submitted by the franchise. *DH* has learnt that there has been no communication between KSCA and RCB about hosting IPL matches, as neither party sees any purpose in it unless there is government permission. KSCA is expecting an outcome in two-three days following their latest talks with government representatives.

On Wednesday, KSCA officials held a fresh round of talks with the committee, which is headed by Greater Bengaluru Authority commissioner M Maheshwar Rao, in a bid to obtain the government's nod to hold matches at the stadium.

The committee was apprised of the works the association has undertaken to meet a majority of the recommendations made in the report by Justice D'Cunha, who investigated the death of 11 fans on June 4 and found several design violations at the venue.

RCB officials, in the meantime, have inspected venues in Mumbai, Raipur, Indore and Pune and have reportedly finalised Mumbai's DY Patil Stadium, which is expected to host five matches. Raipur could host the remaining wo matches.

Henil likes Steyn's aggression 'a lot'

BULAWAYO, PTI: Pacer Henil Patel, who starred in India's six-wicket victory over USA in the U-19 World Cup with a stupendous five-wicket haul, says he draws inspiration from South African fast bowling great Dale Steyn's aggression on the pitch.

Patel showed his class when he ripped through the American batting line-up to collect figures of 5/16 during India's victory here on Thursday to give the five-time champions a perfect start to their campaign.

It was the third best performance by an Indian bowler at any edition of the men's U-19 World Cup -- bettered only by Kamal Passi (6/23 against Zimbabwe in 2012) and Anukul Roy (5/14 against Papua New Guinea in 2018).

"What I get from Dale Steyn is that I like his aggression a lot," Patel told ICC.

"His bowling was so good that there was no batter who could play against him easily because he was so tough to face."

Solid India start favourites against Bangladesh

BULAWAYO, PTI : Seeking to continue their confident start to the tournament, a well-balanced India will begin as firm favourites despite facing a tricky Bangladesh in their second match of the ICC U-19 World Cup here Saturday.

Five-time champions India started their campaign on expected lines, registering a six-wicket win over USA after bundling the opponents out for a paltry 107 in a rain-hit match, with right-arm pacer Henil Patel returning exceptional figures of 5/16 in seven overs and the other bowlers also doing a fine job.

The star-studded Indian batting line-up will hope to get an extended run at the crease against Bangladesh, who are likely to pose a greater challenge to the Ayush Mhatre-led side after a rather comfortable win against the USA.

The opening duo of Mhatre and the incredible 14-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi (**in pic**) will again lead the batting in the company of vice-captain Vihaan Malhotra, all-rounders Aaron George and Vedant Trivedi and wicketkeeper Abhigyan Kundu.

D Deepesh, RS Ambrish, Henil Patel, Kishan Kumar Singh and Udhav Mohan offer the team pace bowling options, while the likes of Kanishk Chouhan, Khilan Patel and Mohamed Enaan shoulder the spin bowling responsibility.

Champions in five of the 16 editions, India are by far the most dominant team in the history of the competition, which started back in 1988 with Australia emerging winners in the inaugural event.

Raising their prospects further is the team's form in the last one year, having won series in England, Australia and South Africa. The victory against USA was India's 14th in last 17 matches, and the side is backing itself to continue the excellent run of form against their next opponents.

Match starts at 1:00 PM IST on Star Sports Network.

Hosts Ranchi Royals move to third place

RANCHI, PTI: Ranchi Royals continued their winning run in the men's Hockey India League (HIL), registering their third win on the trot to prevail 4-1 over JSW Soorma Hockey Club in their final home game of the season here on Friday.

A brace from Tom Boon (20th, 22nd minutes) and goals from Mandeep Singh (47th) and Manmeet Singh Rai (14th) helped Ranchi Royals jump to third place on the points table.

Jeetpal (52nd) scored the only goal for Soorma.

It was an engaging start to the game with both teams looking to lay down the marker in the early exchanges.

JSW Soorma Hockey Club earned their first penalty corner within the first five minutes, creating the first set-piece opportunity of the game.

Despite three penalty corners in the first quarter, they couldn't find a way past Suraj Karkera.

Lakshya bows out after gritty fight with Lin

NEW DELHI, PTI

Lakshya Sen fought through a bruising three-game contest but fell short in the decisive moments to go down in three games against Chinese Taipei's world No. 12 Lin Chun-Yi in men's singles quarterfinals as the home challenge ended at the India Open Super 750 here on Friday.

The 24-year-old from Almora squandered late momentum to lose 21-17, 13-21, 18-21 to Chinese Taipei's Lin Chun-Yi in a high-intensity men's singles quarterfinal.

Lakshya Sen (right) returns to Taiwan's Lin Chun-yi during their quarterfinal at the India Open on Friday. PTI

The contest was a high-quality battle marked by long rallies and sharp exchanges at the net, with both players testing each other's patience and precision over three draining games.

Lakshya started strongly, engaging Lin in fast-paced rallies. The early phase saw the score locked from 4-4 to 7-7 before Lakshya edged ahead at the interval.

Two crisp winners took Lakshya to 13-10 and sustained pressure at the forecourt, aided by Lin's errors, helped him stretch the lead to 16-11. A 54-shot rally ended with Lin hitting long as Lakshya soon earned five game points and sealed the opening game on his third chance.

After the change of ends, the conditions made it difficult to control the shuttle and Lakshya struggled with his length, conceding an 11-5 deficit at the interval. A cross-court smash followed by a sharp return from the forecourt helped him close the gap to 7-12 as he repeatedly targeted Lin's backhand.

A deceptive serve forced Lin wide before another error made it 9-14, and an on-the-line smash further cut down the lead. However, the left-handed Taiwanese regained control, moving to 18-13 after a gruelling 56-shot rally.

Jannik Sinner

Doping scandal made me stronger: Sinner

MELBOURNE, AFP: Jannik Sinner said on Friday a three-month doping ban last year made him stronger as a person and more relaxed on court as he prepares to defend his Australian Open title.

The 24-year-old arrived at Melbourne Park last year under intense pressure, not knowing his fate after a drugs scandal.

He managed to put aside the noise and win the title but his career was put on hold afterwards as he served the three-month suspension for twice testing positive for a banned anabolic steroid in 2024.

Sinner always maintained the product entered his system unintentionally through a massage from his physiotherapist, who had used a spray containing it to treat a cut.

While the World Anti-Doping Agency said Sinner did not intend to cheat, it ordered him to serve the ban as he was responsible for the actions of his entourage.

"Last year was definitely a much more difficult situation because in this moment last year I didn't know exactly what's going to happen," he said.

"So I tried still to enjoy it when I went out on the court, but still had it in my head kind of.

"It was difficult for me, but also for the family. I tried to stay with the people I really love, which at times worked very well. At times it was a bit disappointing, too."

Sinner's ban expired in May and he bounced back to win Wimbledon and the ATP Finals, ending the year as world number two behind fierce rival Carlos Alcaraz.

Alcaraz 'hungry' to break Aus Open drought

MELBOURNE, AFP : Carlos Alcaraz warned on Friday that he was "hungry" to break his Australian Open title drought and become the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam, calling it his primary target in 2026.

The world No. 1 from Spain is the title favourite along with two-time defending champion and great rival Jannik Sinner.

The Melbourne Park crown is the only one of the four majors that Alcaraz has never won, his best performance the quarterfinals in 2024 and 2025.

If he goes all the way this year, he will surpass fellow Spaniard Rafael Nadal as the youngest man to win all four majors. Nadal was 24 when he achieved the feat.

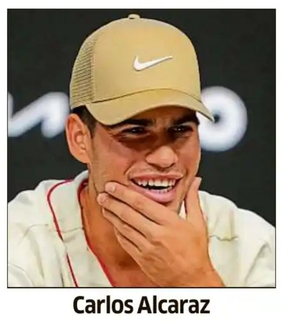
The 22-year-old Alcaraz, who begins his title assault against Australia's 79th-ranked Adam Walton, said he could not wait to get going.

"I think this is my main goal for this year," said Alcaraz, whose only warm-up was a win against Italy's Sinner in a light-hearted exhibition match in South Korea.

"So it's going to be really interesting for me how I prepared, which I think I just made a really good pre-season, just to be in a good shape.

"I'm just hungry for the title, hungry to do a really good result here. I'm just getting ready as much as I can.

I'm really excited about the tournament beginning."



Carlos Alcaraz

Mangalore University finish runners-up

BENGALURU, DHNS: Mangalore University concluded the final day of the 85th All-India Inter-university Athletics Championships with two gold and one bronze medal, which helped them finish runner-up in the overall championship with 109 points, behind Madras University, which logged 134 points, here at the Swarajya Stadium in Moodubidiri on Friday.

The results: Men: 200m: 1. Gokul Pandian (SRM) 21.22s, 2. Prasannakumar V Mannu (Dharwad) 21.55, 3. S R Rohan (Mahatma Gandhi, Kottayam) 21.55.
5000m: 1. Gaurav (Mahatma Jyoti Phule) 14:04.01s, 2. Princeraj Yadav (ASM) 14:04.19, 3. Sachin Yadav (RIMT) 14:08.02.
4x400m relay: 1. Mangalore (3:08.45s new meet record, OR Kerala 3:09.31, 2024), 2. Madras (3:09.17, BMR), 3. Panjab (3:09.90).
Long jump: 1. Sarun Prayasingh (Sambalpur) 7.43m, 2. Sharon Justus (Manomaniam Sundaran) 7.29, 3. Yash Khanvilkar (Mumbai) 7.26.
Hammer throw: Mo Nadeem (Mangalore) 61.74m, 2. Muttappa (Yenepoya DBU) 61.00, 3. Jatin Kumar Repswal (PDUSU, Sikar) 59.52.
Women: 200m: 1. Parthipa Selvaraj (Madras) 24.11s, 2. N Sreena (Mahatma Gandhi, Kottayam) 24.25, 3. Sonia (Chandigarh) 24.38.
5000m: 1. Soni Devi (ASM) 16:50.98s, 2. N Pournami (Mahatma Gandhi, Ktm) 16:51.62, 3. Milali Deepak Bhoyar (Rashtrasant Tukdoji)16:51.71.
4x400m relay: 1. Panjab University (3:42.65s), 2. Madras (3:43.71), 3. Mangalore (3:45.26).
High jump: 1. Pooja (Lovely Professional) 1.85m (new meet record, OR, own, 1.84, 2024), 2. Jonika Pahal (Chandigarh) 1.72, 3. Jamod Payalben (Swarmin Gujarat) 1.72.
Hammer throw: 1. Tanya Chaudhary (Chandigarh) 65.60m (new National record, old Sarita Singh's 65.25, 2017; old meet record Tanya's 62.62m, 2023), 2. Nandni (Chandigarh) 61.84, 3. Grima (Lovely Professional) 56.46.
Championships: Overall: 1. Madras University (134 points), 2. Mangalore University (109), 3. Chandigarh (89).
Team: Men: Madras (74 pts), 2. Mangalore (60), 3. MDU, Rohtak (29).

IN BRIEF

Uttara K'taka script 4-1 win

▶ Raja Mohammed Faheen scored a hat-trick as Uttara Karnataka eased past Hassan DFA 4-1 in the Senior Olympic State Games at the Mahatma Gandhi Stadium in Tumkur on Friday, reports DHNS.

Results: Uttara Karnataka: 4 (Raja Mohammed Faheen 10th, 45th, 55th, Ehaab 58th) bt Hassan DFA: 1 (ShashiKumar 19th); Kodagu DFA: 2 (Annappa YR 12th, Mohammed Salahudeen PA 60th+1).

BTM FC register easy 2-0 victory

BENGALURU, DHNS: Subhesh K and Sochan Shatsang scored a goal each as BTM FC registered an easy 2-0 victory over AGORC FC in the BDFA A Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Friday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

Subhesh opened the scoring in the 22nd minute to hand BTM a 1-0 lead. Sochan doubled their advantage in the final moments of the second half to give his side all three points.

In another fixture, Albert Akoijam's 27th-minute goal helped Stride FC to a 1-0 victory over Technic FF.

Results: A Division: BTM FC: 2 (Subhesh K 22nd, Sochan Shatsang 90th+3) bt AGORC FC: 0; Stride FC: 1 (Albert Akoijam 27th) bt Technic FF: 0
B Division: Shooterz FC: 3 (Finto 5th, 56th, Mutum RishiKanta Singh 22nd) bt Bangalore Gunners FC: 1 (Vishnu-Vardhan S 62nd).

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

U-19 World Cup: Bangladesh vs India, Japan vs Sri Lanka. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 2** & **JioHotstar.**

WPL: Mumbai Indians vs UP Warriorz **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1** & **JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: Manchester United vs Manchester City **(6:00 pm)**, Liverpool vs Burnley, Chelsea vs Brentford, Leeds United vs Fulham, Sunderland vs Crystal Palace, Tottenham Hotspur vs West Ham United **(8:30 pm)**, Nottingham Forest vs Arsenal **(11:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network & JioHotstar.**

HOCKEY

HIL: Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers vs Hyderabad Toofans **(5:00 pm)**, Vedanta Kalinga Lancers vs SG Pipers **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 1.**

CRICKET VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY

Vishvaraj storm blows Punjab away

Saurashtra post 9-wkt win to set up final against Vidarbha

Saurashtra's Vishvaraj Jadeja scored an unbeaten 165 against Punjab during the second semifinal of the Vijay Hazare Trophy at the BCCI's CoE ground in Bengaluru on Friday. PTI

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Opener Vishvaraj Jadeja hammered a blazing century on a chilly evening at BCCI's Centre of Excellence as Saurashtra outplayed Punjab in a high-scoring semifinal of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Friday.

Jadeja (165 n.o., 127b, 18x4, 3x6) and his opening partner Desai (64, 63b, 9x4) made a mockery of a competitive 292-run target with a blistering opening wicket stand of 167 runs in just 23 overs that powered the two-time champions to a thumping nine-wicket victory with 10.3 overs to spare.

Saurashtra will now take on an equally in-form Vidarbha in what promises to be a high-octane final on Sunday.

From the moment Jadeja and Desai took guard under the lights, their intentions were very clear—go as hard as possible against the Punjab bowlers. The 27-year-old Jadeja was the initial aggressor, flicking anything that was directed at the middle or leg-side line with absolute disdain. When Punjab tried the off-stump trajectory to counter it, Jadeja was equally up for the task, driving and cutting with absolute ease on a belter of a pitch. Even after the Powerplay fielding restrictions, Jadeja ensured Vidarbha maintained a high tempo in the chase by getting a boundary almost every over.

It was one of those days when a batter was in his zone and the bowlers were nothing but battering rams. Despite playing in top gear for the entirety of his innings, Jadeja hardly essayed a false shot except when on 120 when he was dropped in the deep.

Desai played an ideal foil for Jadeja. Seeing Jadeja smash everything in his sight, Desai just focussed on giving his partner as much of the strike. However, at the same time, he too went about his job at a brisk pace, scoring boundaries at regular intervals. The double whammy forced Punjab into submission midway through the chase itself and thereafter, they just went through the motions.

Punjab were left to rue the failure of their middle-order to build on the brilliant foundation laid by their top-order for the loss. Opener Prabhsimran Singh scored a measured 87 off 89 balls while one-drop Anmolpreet Singh cracked a composed 100 off 105 balls as Punjab looked like surpassing 300 when the duo was batting.

Both Prabhsimran and Anmolpreet nicely alternated between caution and aggression during their 109-run stand for the second wicket, but once the former was dismissed by Chirag Jani in the 32nd over, Punjab struggled to get a move-on. Barring a fighting 38-ball 42 from Ramandeep Singh, the rest of the middle and lower order batters were out for single-digit scores.

Brief scores: Punjab: 291 all out in 50 overs (Harnoor Singh 33, Prabhsimran Singh 87, Anmolpreet Singh 100, Ramandeep Singh 42; Chetan Sakariya 4-60, Ankur Panwar 2-54, Chirag Jani 2-73) lt to Saurashtra: 293/1 in 39.3 overs (Harvik Desai 64, Vishvaraj Jadeja 165 n.o., Prerak Mankad 52 n.o.) by 9 wkts.
PoM: Vishvaraj Jadeja.
Final: Jan 18: Vidarbha vs Saurashtra.

ICC to visit Bangla to solve stalemate

BCB adamant on relocating T20 WC games from India

DUBAI, PTI

A two-member team of the ICC will land in Dhaka on Saturday to resolve the deadlock surrounding Bangladesh's participation in next month's T20 World Cup in India, hoping to allay their security concerns, having already indicated that a change of venue is impractical.

Bangladesh has been asking the global governing body to relocate its World Cup matches, scheduled to be held in Kolkata and Mumbai, on the pretext of a perceived security threat to its players.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) raised this demand after national team pacer Mustafizur Rahman was abruptly delinked from his IPL contract with the Kolkata Knight Riders following a BCCI directive.

"Yes, that's the information (ICC officials' visit to Dhaka) at the moment. Discussions are going on at the moment, and all possible ways to handle the situation will be discussed. We expect Bangladesh government officials to also take part in the talks," a source privy to the development said on condition of anonymity.

Mustafizur Rahman

He said the Bangladesh Cricket Board has already conveyed to the ICC its apprehensions during a recent video conference, particularly with regard to playing in Mumbai.

Bangladesh is scheduled to face Nepal in their Group C match at the Wankhede Stadium on February 17.

But the board informed the ICC that remarks by a few Indian politicians from Mumbai could be considered as a threat to its players' security.

The BCB source indicated that the possibility of moving the matches to a different Indian city, possibly to the southern parts, or to Sri Lanka will be pondered over in the parley, which might take place at the Sher-e-Bangla stadium in Dhaka.

However, it's learnt that the ICC was firm in its view that such hypothetical scenarios could not be viewed as a strong reason to shift the venues of matches.

In its own security assessment of the marquee event, the ICC had placed the threat perception at low to moderate -- a regular norm during such events.

The Bangladesh side, it's learnt, will again raise the point of Mustafizur's removal from the IPL to reinforce its claims of security threats to its players in India, along with the recent spate of anti-Bangladesh protests in various parts of the country.

But the ICC is unlikely to move away from its stand that last-minute venue changes will set an unwanted precedent and other member nations.

Sandesh Jhingan

FC Goa players accept paycuts amid ISL logjam

NEW DELHI, PTI

FC Goa players, including India captain Sandesh Jhingan and support staff have accepted pay cut for the truncated Indian Super League (ISL) season beginning February 14, the club said, terming their decision as a "selfless" act.

The Goan club said in a Thursday night statement on 'X' that it had "honest and difficult conversations" with the players and support staff about the challenges ahead in view of the turmoil in Indian football.

"In a moment of real uncertainty for Indian football, our club had honest and difficult conversations about the challenges we are facing. What followed was something that made us incredibly proud," the statement said.

"Our First Team players and Technical Staff stepped forward, stood together, and chose to support the club by agreeing to reduce their remuneration during this period. This was not an easy decision. It was a selfless one."

The AIFF Super Cup champion team said it was "deeply humbled by this gesture.

Ranji Trophy: Padikkal boost for Karnataka as Smaran ruled out

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka will get the services of an in-form Devdutt Padikkal for their penultimate Group B Ranji Trophy match against Madhya Pradesh.

The premier domestic first-class tour resumes after a while-ball break during which Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (T20) and Vijay Hazare Trophy (50-over) tournaments were held.

Padikkal, who reeled off four hundreds to top 700 runs in the Vijay Hazare, could play only Karnataka's opening match against Saurashtra in October before he was called up for the Indian Test team against visiting West Indies and South Africa.

Padikkal's availability somewhat offsets the absence of an injured R Smaran, who had been in prolific form in the red-ball tournament, having amassed 595 runs in five matches at an average of 119 with a highest of 227 not out.

Devdutt Padikkal

The squad for Ranji Trophy: Mayank Agarwal (Captain), SJ Nikin Jose, Devdutt Padikkal, Karun Nair, KL Shrijith (WK), Abhinav Manohar, Shreyas Gopal, Vidyadhar Patil, Vidwath Kaverappa, Abhilash Shetty, Mohsin Khan, Shikhar Shetty, Kruthik Krishna (WK), Aneesh KV, Venkatesh M.
Coach: Yeregoud K; **Bowling coach**: Mansur Ali Khan; **Fielding coach**: Shabarish P Mohan; **Manager**: PV Sumanth; **Strength & conditioning coach**: Irfanulla Khan; **Physiotherapist**: Abhishek Kulkarni; **Performance analyst**: Giri Prasad; **Masseur**: Somasundar CM.
CK Nayudu Trophy: Aneeshwar Gautam (Captain), Prakhar Chaturvedi, Karthik SU, Harshil Dharmani, KP Karthikeya, Dhruv Prabhakar, Samit Dravid, Sanjay Ashwin (WK), Yashovardhan Parantap, Manvanth Kumar L, Hardik Raj, Shashikumar K, Dhanush Gowda, Monish Reddy, Faizan Khan (WK). **Coach**: Ganesh Satish; **Assistant coach**: Deepak Chougule; **Strength & Conditioning coach**: Kiran A; **Physiotherapist**: Vijay Mudgal; **Performance analyst**: Kiran Kudtarkar; **Masseur**: Shantinath Patil.

Aaradhya, Aahan emerge champions

BENGALURU, DHNS: Fifth seed Aahan Shaw and third seed Aaradhya Darshan Shetty claimed the boys' and girls' singles titles respectively in the Venky's AITA under-12 talent series at the Focus Tennis and Pickleball Academy here.

Aahan defeated the seventh seed Vedanth Arumugam of Karnataka 6-2, 6-2 to be crowned the boys' champion.

The youngster also completed the fine double, winning the doubles title with Vedanth Arumugam of Karnataka.

In the girls' singles final, Aaradhya pulled off an upset against top-seeded Aahana Bhat of Karnataka 6-1, 6-3.

Results: (All finals, prefix denotees seeding): Boys: Singles: 5-Aahan Shaw (Kar) bt 7-Vedanth Arumugam (Kar) 6-2, 6-2.
Doubles: 3-Aahan Shaw (Kar) / Vedanth Arumugam (Kar) bt 4-Mohit Pappala (Kar) / Vihaan Bharath Adhvik (TN) 6-3, 6-1.
Girls: Singles: 3-Aaradhya Darshan Shetty (Kar) bt 1-Aahana Bhat (Kar) 6-1, 6-3.

Razmi shock for Damani

BENGALURU, DHNS

Promising Rayaan Razmi of Maharashtra scored a shock win over the formidable Brijesh Damani of PSPB in the pre-quarterfinals of the senior men's National Snooker Championship in Bahadurgarh in Haryana on Friday.

The 23-year-old's lopsided 5-0 win over last year's finalist helped him set up a quarterfinal meeting with defending champion Pankaj Advani, who overcame fellow PSPB cueist Manan Chandra 5-2 in another last-16 encounter.

Razmi, a former junior National champion in both snooker and billiards, carried far too many guns for Damani. Fortunately for the Mumbai youngster, his seasoned rival had a poor day at the office. Barring the second frame of the best-of-nine frame clash, which was decided on the black, Razmi was largely untroubled.

Pankaj Advani

Elsewhere, Ketan Chawla of Madhya Pradesh outplayed IH Manudev of Karnataka 5-2.

In the quarters, Chawla takes on Dhvaj Haria, the reigning National 6-red snooker champion. Haria overcame E Pandurangaiah of Railways 5-3.

Formidable Aditya Mehta, Laxman Rawat, Sourav Kothari and Malkeet Singh were the others to make the last-eight stage.

Results (Pre-quarters): Ketan Chawla (MP) bt IH Manudev (Kar) 5-2 (58-56, 0-82 (68), 69-36, 34-73 (61), 81-10, 65-56 (56), 64-27); Rayaan Razmi (Mah) bt Brijesh Damani (PSPB) 5-0 (100-31, 61-54, 59-10, 88 (67) -0, 48-17); Pankaj Advani (PSPB) bt Manan Chandra (PSPB) 5-2 (81-19, 53-63, 64-26, 85-0, 77-34, 1-94 (94), 65-6); Malkeet Singh (RSPB) bt Nitin Sharma (Chg) 5-1 (90-6, 20-64, 66 (61) -26, 58-15, 96 (53) -28, 74-11). Laxman Rawat (PSPB) bt Paras Gupta (UP) 5-2 (58-30, 35-79, 71-40, 125 (84) -1, 83 (83) -47, 14-105 (51, 49), 74-0); Dhvaj Haria (PSPB) bt E Pandurangaiah (RSPB) 5-3 (71-17, 13-91 (87), 31-78 (66), 88 (88) -1, 80-16, 69-53, 58-66, 71-42); Aditya Mehta (PSPB) bt Md Hussain Khan (RSPB) 5-2 (94 (56) -18, 71-60, 74-33, 16-107, 8-112, 78-22, 75-62); Sourav Kothari (PSPB) bt S Shrikrishna (PSPB) 5-1 (77 (70) -23, 28-57, 61-5, 79 (64) -23, 74 (69) -12, 64-53).

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ADVERTORIAL & PROMOTIONAL LIFESTYLE FEATURE

BERRY, BERRY GOOD! PAGE 02

CALL OF THE WILD PAGE 04

Show Buzz | Preeti Jhangiani

'Roles are being written for women of all ages...'

Actor Preeti Jhangiani is one of the most loved faces on screen, of early 2000s cinema. She was the favourite face of Yash Raj production, Mohabbatein, the winsome heroine in Awara Paagal Deewana, LOC Kargil, Sajna Ve Sajna... Mohabbatein celebrated its silver jubilee in November 2025. Her portrayal of Kiran, soft-spoken and emotional, continues to be cherished by audiences across generations.

Over the years, Preeti has brought in her versatility through a series of strong performances in films including The Udaipur Files that received national attention, and several successful regional projects. Her filmography shows choices centred around emotion, storytelling and meaningful characters.

Shilpi Madan caught up with her for this chat.

What's keeping you busy these days?
Following the success of Kafas, I am finalising a few other OTT scripts. Sports keeps me busy - I am the president of People's Arm-wrestling Federation India. I am also a member of the FICCI Sports committee, so a lot of work to do!

What was the turning point in your career?
Definitely the music video 'Chhui Mui Si Tum Lagti Ho' and then of course Mohabbatein. These were the two big turning points in my career.

How was the experience of sharing screen space with Shahrukh Khan?
Unforgettable. Shahrukh Khan is an amazing person, and a charming, intelligent actor. Very gracious.

What has been your biggest learning?
The roles, and attitudes towards roles and characters, have completely changed. There was a time when dialogues were given on set. A heroine had no defined role - she could just be bubbly and innocent and sweet in all films! Luckily that is certainly not the case now in any Indian film. Roles are being written for women of all ages. I think it is a very exciting time for women today in Indian cinema. The roles I am listening to in new scripts have depth and character. The new young directors are a brilliant bunch – they have strong vision.

What is your beauty and fitness routine?
Staying active. Keep walking and eat in moderation. I eat very less roti, rice or bread. I eat mostly eggs, vegetables and meat. I also make sure I drink lots of water and have my water bottle with me everywhere since I travel aplenty. While travelling, I try to adhere to salads and less masala.

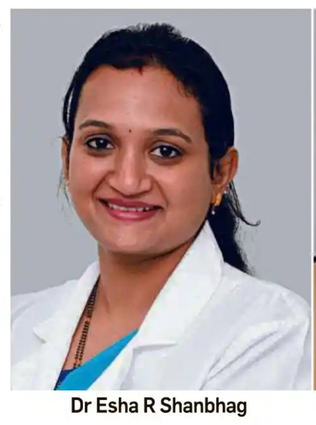
A habit you have picked up recently on sets...
I always have a book with me. It is an old habit.

How has working in south Indian cinema been?
Absolutely amazing! I love their cinematography and they work hard on your look and how to present a woman beautifully. For them, cinema is everything. They sleep, breathe, eat cinema and that is the reason south Indian films are super successful. I have had the good fortune of working with Pawan Kalyan, Balakrishna, Mohan Babu, NTR Jr and Rajamouli

> I think it is a very exciting time for women today in Indian cinema. The roles I am listening to in new scripts have depth and character. The new young directors are a brilliant bunch – they have strong vision.

HPV prevention and screening matter more than ever

The key to preventing HPV-related cancers is in regular screening and vaccination. **Dr Esha R Shanbhag**, Associate Consultant - Gynaecological Oncology, Aster Whitefield Hospital and **Dr Mythili Kundur**, Associate Consultant - Gynaecological Oncology, Aster CMI Hospital, Bengaluru, explain why it's crucial for women to get screened at least once in five years



Dr Esha R Shanbhag

Dr Mythili Kundur

Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable cancers, yet it continues to claim the lives of thousands of women in India every year. The reason is not a lack of medical solutions, but delayed action. At the heart of this disease lies Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a virus so common, silent and underestimated that most people are unaware of its long-term consequences until it is too late.

Nearly 99 per cent of cervical cancers are caused by persistent infection with high-risk HPV. It is transmitted primarily through intimate skin-to-skin contact, and globally, over 80 per cent of sexually active individuals, both men and women, will be exposed to it at some point in their lives, often without ever knowing it.

What makes HPV particularly dangerous is its silence. Most infections cause no symptoms and are naturally cleared by the immune system. However, in a small proportion of women, high-risk HPV persists for years, quietly triggering abnormal cellular changes in the cervix. By the time symptoms such as abnormal bleeding appear, the disease is often no longer in its early stages. This delayed presentation is a key reason why cervical cancer is still detected late in many Indian women.

Prevention is within reach
Prevention, however, is firmly within reach. The HPV vaccine is more than 90 per cent effective in preventing infections caused by the high-risk HPV types responsible for most HPV-related cancers. By preventing the infection itself, the vaccine stops the chain of events that can lead to cancer several years later.

Importantly, HPV vaccination is not just for girls. Both girls and boys should be vaccinated. While cervical cancer affects women, HPV can also cause cancers of the throat, anus and penis in men. Vaccinating both genders also reduces overall virus transmission within the community, strengthening population-level protection.

Vaccination is a must
The ideal age for vaccination is between nine and 25 years, preferably before the onset of sexual activity, when the immune response is strongest. However, adults can still benefit from vaccination up to the age of 45. The vaccine does not treat an existing infection, but it helps prevent reinfection and protects against HPV subtypes the individual has not yet encountered.

Despite this, many still view HPV vaccination as optional, a mindset that is risky. Most cervical cancers are directly linked to HPV, making vaccination one of the rare opportunities in medicine to prevent cancer at its root. Skipping it means missing a proven, safe and effective intervention.

Screening detects infection early
Screening is the second critical pillar of prevention. Cervical cancer develops slowly, over 10 to 15 years. This gives us a wide window to detect and treat pre-cancerous changes, if women are screened regularly. All sexually active women between 25 and 65 years should undergo routine screening, even if they feel perfectly healthy. Screening includes the Pap smear, which detects abnormal cervical cells, and HPV testing, which identifies high-risk viral infection. HPV testing, alone or combined with a Pap smear, is recommended once every five years.

When screening results are abnormal, colposcopy - a simple outpatient procedure - allows closer examination and targeted biopsies. Countries with organised screening programmes have reduced cervical cancer deaths by over 50 per cent, underlining how powerful early detection can be.

At Aster Hospitals, comprehensive cervical cancer care spans prevention, early detection and advanced treatment. From HPV vaccination and advanced HPV-based screening to expert oncopathology, colposcopy and integrated oncology services, care is delivered seamlessly under one roof. For women requiring treatment, minimally-invasive and robotic-assisted surgeries enable faster recovery, while advanced chemotherapy and radiation facilities ensure effective care for advanced-stage disease.

Early diagnosis – better treatment outcome
There's a stark difference between women diagnosed early and those who present late. Early-stage cancers often require simpler procedures with excellent outcomes, while advanced disease demands more intensive treatment and carries greater physical and emotional burden.

Cervical cancer is no longer a mystery. The tools to prevent it, such as vaccination, screening and awareness, are well within your grasp. What remains is the urgency to act. When prevention is prioritised, cervical cancer becomes not an inevitability, but a preventable disease, one no woman should have to face.

An Evening of Devotional and Spiritual Music
IRB HIGHWAY TO GROWTH
॥ पंचम निषाद ॥
॥तुका म्हणे कहे कबीरा॥
JAYATEERTH MEVUNDI | BHUVANESH KOMKALI
Content narrator (in Marathi and Hindi) : Dr. Dhanashree Lele
Mandar Puranik - Tabla | Dnyaneshwar Sonawane - Harmonium | Sukhad Munde - Pakhwaj | Sunil Kumar - Flute | Suryakant Surve - Additional Rhythms
Sunday, 1 February 2026, 5.30 pm onwards
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SALE AT FLAT 75% DISCOUNT
LACOSTE | D'Cot Quality Wear Clothing | parx | ColorPlus | Raymond | aurelia Women's wear | RARE RABBIT
WINTER & SUMMER GARMENTS:- Sweat Shirt-Jacket-Huddie-Sweater-Top-Lower-Long Kurti
Pick any at Rs. 100/-, 200/- & 300/-
Premium Winter Garments MRP from 4000 to 5000
Pick any at Rs. 400/- & 1100/-
LADIES GARMENTS:- Ladies Top, Lower, Half Pant, Salwar kamij, Kurti & other mix garments
Pick any at Rs. 100/- & 200/-
GENTS GARMENTS:- Gents T-shirt, Kurta, Nikar, Bermuda, Modi Koti & other mix garments
Pick any at Rs. 200/- & 400/-
Reason:- The company brings the entire year's stock from warehouses and showrooms for such sales
Ladies & Gents Sports Shoes MRP from 2000 to 5000
BUY at Rs. 600/- only
Remember SALE is just for 2 days only
17th & 18th January'26- Sat-Sun
TIME: 10AM-10PM
SHUBH CONVENTION
JP Nagar 7th phase, Nr Brigade millennium, Kotnoor main road
6th main Puttenehalli, Bangalore Karnataka 78
ORG BY: MP EXPORT HOUSE
FREE ENTRY
FREE PARKING

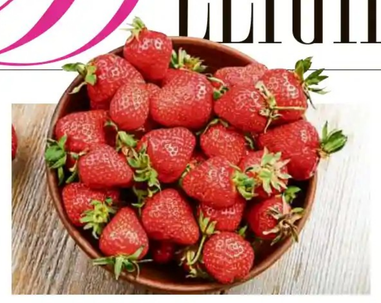
ONKYO DENON marantz Pioneer YAMAHA polkaudio Q ACOUSTICS JBL Klipsch Jamo BOSE ELAC SAMSUNG SONY Panasonic EPSON BenQ
THE BIG AUDIO SALE
Limited Period Offer. EMI Options.
upto 55% OFF!
AV Receiver @24,990/- | 5.1 HT @59,990/- | HT Projector @59,990/-*
AV RECEIVERS - SPEAKERS - SUB-WOOFERS - HTIB - SOUNDBARS - PROJECTORS - TV
MODERN WORLD
Domlur 7760988169 7760988163
Kalyan Nagar 7760988164 7760988160
* conditions apply

Wknd. DELIGHT

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

GOODNESS OF STRAWBERRY

Strawberry is a recommended fruit as it is rich in Vitamin C and antioxidants. This is a good time to make it a part of your diet. It helps strengthen your immune system which is a need of the hour in the winter months. It also aids digestion. Along with meals it gives you a sense of being full and helps in weight management.



HEALTHY CHOICE

Strawberries offer many health benefits. They are known to help reduce bad cholesterol and blood pressure, promoting heart health. They have a low glycaemic index. They contain flavonoids that reduce inflammation in the brain. They are believed to cut the risk of Alzheimer's Disease if consumed regularly.

The fibre in strawberries acts as a prebiotic and supports regular bowel movements

BERRY WISE

Berry nutritious!

These red luscious berries aren't just tasty, they are also loaded with Nature's goodness. As Thilaga Manigandan, a consultant nutritionist, puts it, "Strawberries are a low-calorie powerhouse loaded with antioxidants, folate and potassium, and strengthen immunity. The flavonoids in them help keep the brain sharp. The best part is they can be enjoyed in moderation by everyone including heart patients and people with diabetes."

Berry, berry good!

The strawberry season is back. A visit to a farm to pluck the fruit is both fun and an opportunity to connect with Nature, says **Deepa Natarajan Lobo**, while presenting two recipes you can try at home

As strawberries make their much-awaited annual return, many families head to the sun-kissed strawberry farms to enjoy an exciting experience of plucking the fruits straight from the vine. Be it on the misty mountains of Mahabaleshwar or Shillong, or closer home – Ooty, Coonoor and even the outskirts of Bengaluru - strawberry picking is a popular form of agro-tourism which gives visitors an opportunity to reconnect with food systems and understand farming and seasonality.

Brian Ammanna, a communications professional, had a memorable strawberry picking experience last year at a farm in north Bengaluru. "For a reasonable price per head, we were taken into the sprawling fields and given instructions on how to pick the best fruits. Armed with a basket, we collected and tasted the delicious produce and took it home at a subsidised fee. It was an experience that both adults and children thoroughly enjoyed," he recollects.

For many families and urban travellers, strawberry-picking offers more than just fresh produce. Vandita Venessa Thomas, an influencer with a small child, loves the many teachable moments that strawberry picking provides. "Kids get to see where food comes from, understand how much effort goes into farming and experience the farm-to-plate journey. Moreover, picky eaters are far more excited to eat the fruit that they selected," she notes. "All in all, it's a lovely experience outdoors that combines fun learning and quality time, offering a refreshing break from screens and indoor routine," she adds.

BY CHEF AAYUSHI BAJAJ

Strawberry Hot Chocolate

What you need:
- For strawberry base
- Six fresh strawberries (or four tablespoons of strawberry puree)
- One and a half tablespoons of sugar (adjust to taste)
- A squeeze of lemon (optional, enhances strawberry flavour)

For hot chocolate
- One cup of milk
- Two tablespoons of fresh cream (optional, for richness)
- 70 gm of white chocolate, chopped
- Quarter teaspoon of vanilla extract
- Two drops of pink food colour (optional)

For garnishing
- Whipped cream
- Freeze-dried strawberry powder or fresh strawberry slices
- White chocolate shavings

Preparation:

Strawberry puree

Add chopped strawberries and sugar in a pan. Cook on low heat for 3–4 minutes till soft and jammy. Blend into a smooth puree (strain if you want a glossy finish). Add a tiny squeeze of lemon to brighten the flavours.

Hot chocolate

Heat milk and cream in a saucepan until steaming (don't boil). Add chopped white chocolate and whisk till melted and smooth.

Stir in vanilla and pink colour (optional).

To combine

Add four tablespoons of strawberry puree to the hot chocolate. Whisk till fully blended and slightly frothy. Pour into a mug, top with whipped cream, sprinkle strawberry powder, decorate with a strawberry heart slice and serve

PIC COURTESY: PINKK SUGARS - THE MODERN BISTRO

Blush Berry Mousse

What you need:
- For biscuit joconde
- Three-fourths cup of egg whites
- Five large whole eggs
- Quarter cup of sugar
- One and two-thirds cups of icing sugar
- Two cups of ground almonds
- Half a cup of flour
- Quarter cup of oil

For strawberry mousse cream
- Three-fourth cup of whipping cream 35 per cent
- Quarter cup of sugar
- Two teaspoons of gelatin powder
- One-third cup of strawberry puree
- A tiny pinch of red food colour

For red velvet sponge
- One and a half cups of red velvet premix
- One and a half tablespoons of oil
- Quarter cup of water

For strawberry jelly
- Half a cup of strawberry puree
- Two tablespoons of sugar
- One teaspoon of pectin

Preparation:

Joconde base

Whisk almond flour, icing sugar, eggs and flour until smooth. Fold in whipped egg whites and melted butter.

Bake in a thin layer at 180-degrees C for 10–12 minutes. Cool and brush lightly with strawberry syrup.

Strawberry mousse

Heat strawberry puree with sugar until warm. Add gelatin and dissolve. Cool slightly, then fold in whipped cream. Keep chilled.

Red velvet sponge

Add water and oil to red velvet premix. Pour the batter into a ring, and bake it for 35 minutes at 171-degrees C.

Jelly layer

Boil the strawberry puree and stir it. Add pectin and sugar, blend well. Chill for 2–3 hours to set.

Assembling the layers

Place the joconde base at the bottom and spread a layer of strawberry mousse over it. Gently place the red velvet sponge on top, followed by another thin layer of mousse.

Finish with a layer of jelly to complete the assembly. Top it up with strawberry cream and fresh chopped strawberries. Slice and serve chilled.

PIC COURTESY: SMOOR

LEISURE

Beetle Bailey

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

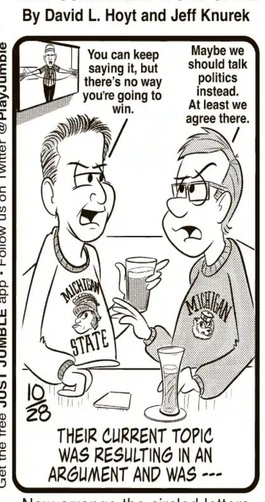
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TNGUS

CLYEC

JAINDO

SBULEH


You can keep saying it, but there's no way you're going to win.
Maybe we should talk politics instead. At least we agree there.
MICHIGAN STATE
MICHIGAN
10 28
THEIR CURRENT TOPIC WAS RESULTING IN AN ARGUMENT AND WAS ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

TO

Answers

STUNG CYCLE ADJOIN BUSHEL

Their current topic was resulting in an argument and was — SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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HITORI-129

4	3	1	2	8	6	5	4
3	3	5	7	6	8	7	4
2	6	7	4	3	4	7	1
7	1	6	5	4	2	8	7
2	1	3	7	5	7	1	8
1	5	7	6	7	4	2	7
3	7	8	6	1	4	6	3
5	2	7	8	4	3	7	7

SOLUTION for HITORI-129

7	■	3	4	8	■	2	5
3	6	■	1	■	8	7	■
■	2	4	7	6	■	5	1
8	1	■	5	7	3	■	2
■	8	2	■	5	6	1	7
1	7	■	3	4	■	6	■
4	■	8	6	■	5	■	3
■	5	6	8	2	1	3	4

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 130

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
4 One may have kept a watch on him (6)
7 To disturb the rest before you go, is an offence (8)
8 Grab a few eggs (6)
10 Shout for food and drink (5)
13 Chimney lining (4)
14 What predators do in the Catskills (4)
15 They're cossetted in carpet slippers (4)
16 Spray something black? (3)
17 Many a dirty dog's expression of displeasure (4)
19 A blemish you'll notice (4)
21 Like the agonised cries father let out (9)
23 Knox, for instance (4)
24 Ali's girl? (4)
26 Handle in beastly fashion (3)
27 At that time, one hotel in ten (4)
29 Catch an unwary rat on the piano (4)
32 See a chap getting dressed (4)
33 How can you make a feast merely on a bone? (5)
34 It's the arrangement for payments (6)
35 Considering one's family during a bad night (8)
36 Subtle, fishy invitation to have a bite? (6)

DOWN
1 Rod will be faithful (5)
2 Flat from which a woman has been left out twice? (5)
3 One used by a rider in raising the stirrups? (4)
4 A royal meeting calls for new coats (5)
5 A fight, but about nothing (4)
6 Music for an extraterrestrial, possibly in outer space (6)
9 Casualties, one of which may be termed dead (6)
11 Successful new thing, obviously not NG (3)
12 The senior of two fielders (5)
13 Calmed down and paid up (7)
15 Figures on the golf course (3)
16 Write a little bit (3)
18 Something shaky, we hear (6)
20 China, silver, or possibly glass (5)
21 The method of a showman (3)
22 Flat plane piece used in surfing (3)
23 If lace is woven this way, it's easy (6)
25 Master coming to a mistaken conclusion? (3)
28 That which is more likely to reduce speed (5)
30 Quick and quiet in attack (5)
31 The not exactly podgy associate of Bess (5)
32 It goes to church, note (4)
33 James's contribution to ribbon development (4)

EASY

ACROSS
4. National song (6)
7. Sanction (8)
8. Raising agent (6)
10. Communion table (5)
13. Trappist e.g. (4)
14. Far down (4)
15. Obscene (4)
16. Pig pen (3)
17. American ostrich (4)
19. Epochs (4)
21. Prepare an ambush (3,2,4)
23. Hawaiian dance (4)
24. Grime (4)
26. Floor covering (3)
27. At that time (4)
29. Heroic (4)
32. Prophet (4)
33. Willow (5)
34. Ludicrous (6)
35. Munificent (8)
36. Tranquil (6)

DOWN
1. Cold dish (5)
2. Malice (5)
3. Not rich (4)
4. Permit (5)
5. Type of wood (4)
6. Happenings (6)
9. Make beloved (6)
11. Meadow (3)
12. Month (5)
13. Flow windingly (7)
15. Garland (3)
16. Was seated (3)
18. Radiator e.g. (6)
20. Ceremonies (5)
21. Heave (3)
22. Be victorious (3)
23. Meek (6)
25. Contend (3)
28. Fence of bushes (5)
30. Flier (5)
31. Bread part (5)
32. Certain (4)
33. Portent (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 130

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 4, Albert 7, Tres-pass 8, Clutch 10, Cheer 13, Soot 14, Kill 15, Pets 16, Jet 17, D-rat 19, Spot 21, Heartfelt 23, Fort 24, Lisa 26, Paw 27, T-H-en 29, Tra-p 32, C-lad 33, Beano 34, Tithes 35, Thin-kin-g 36, Gentle.
DOWN: 1, Stick 2, L-Eve-L 3, Spur (rev.) 4, Ascot 5, B-O-ut 6, Rock-E.T. 9, Losses 11, Hit 12, Elder 13, Settled 15, Par 16, Jot 18, Rattle 20, Plate 21, How 22, Fin 23, Facile 25, MA-n 28, Haste 30, Ra-p-id 31, Porgy 32, Ch.-it 33, Bond.

EASY
ACROSS: 4. Anthem; 7. Approval; 8. Leaven; 10. Altar; 13. Monk; 14. Deep; 15. Lewd; 16. Sty; 17. Rhea; 19. Eras; 21. Lie in wait; 23. Hula; 24. Dirt; 26. Rug; 27. Then; 29. Epic; 32. Seer; 33. Osier; 34. Absurd; 35. Generous; 36. Serene.
DOWN: 1. Salad; 2. Spite; 3. Poor; 4. Allow; 5. Teak; 6. Events; 9. Endear; 11. Lea; 12. April; 13. Meander; 15. Let; 16. Sat; 18. Heater; 20. Rites; 21. Lug; 22. Win; 23. Humble; 25. Vie; 28. Hedge; 30. Pilot; 31. Crust; 32. Sure; 33. Omen.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. STYLE

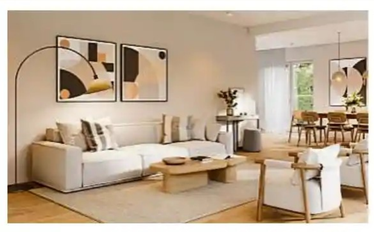
Off-white hues give your interiors a calm and airy ambience

SPRING SHADES

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

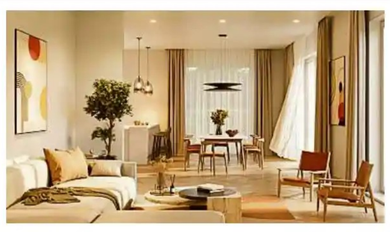
SHADES OF SPRING

It's that time of the year when you put your heavy woollens away. The morning walks are easier and it's time to relook at your interior decor too. Spring gives you that much-needed break from a harsh winter and is a great mood-enhancer. Some changes to the colours around your living spaces makes this season even more enjoyable.



SEASON FOR PASTELS

Light pastel shades are ideal for spring and summer. Typical spring fabrics – sheer curtains, lightweight upholstery and shades – in pastel hues give you the feel of the outdoors. These colours complement the textures of fresh flowers and indoor greenery. Turn to pastel shades in decor objects too for a spring theme to the interiors.



Colour Code

Light pink

This is a pleasant hue that reminds you of blooming flowers. It can be used in soft furnishings and wall hangings. You can use pink in window drapes too. It has a sense of freshness about it and lightens the interiors.

Lawn green

This colour is a symbol of growth. It has a calming effect on you. It reminds you of fresh leaves on the trees and the cool breeze of the spring. You can bring in this colour in your table-top accessories. You can even incorporate this shade in decor objects. This green blends well with most colours.

PALE YELLOW

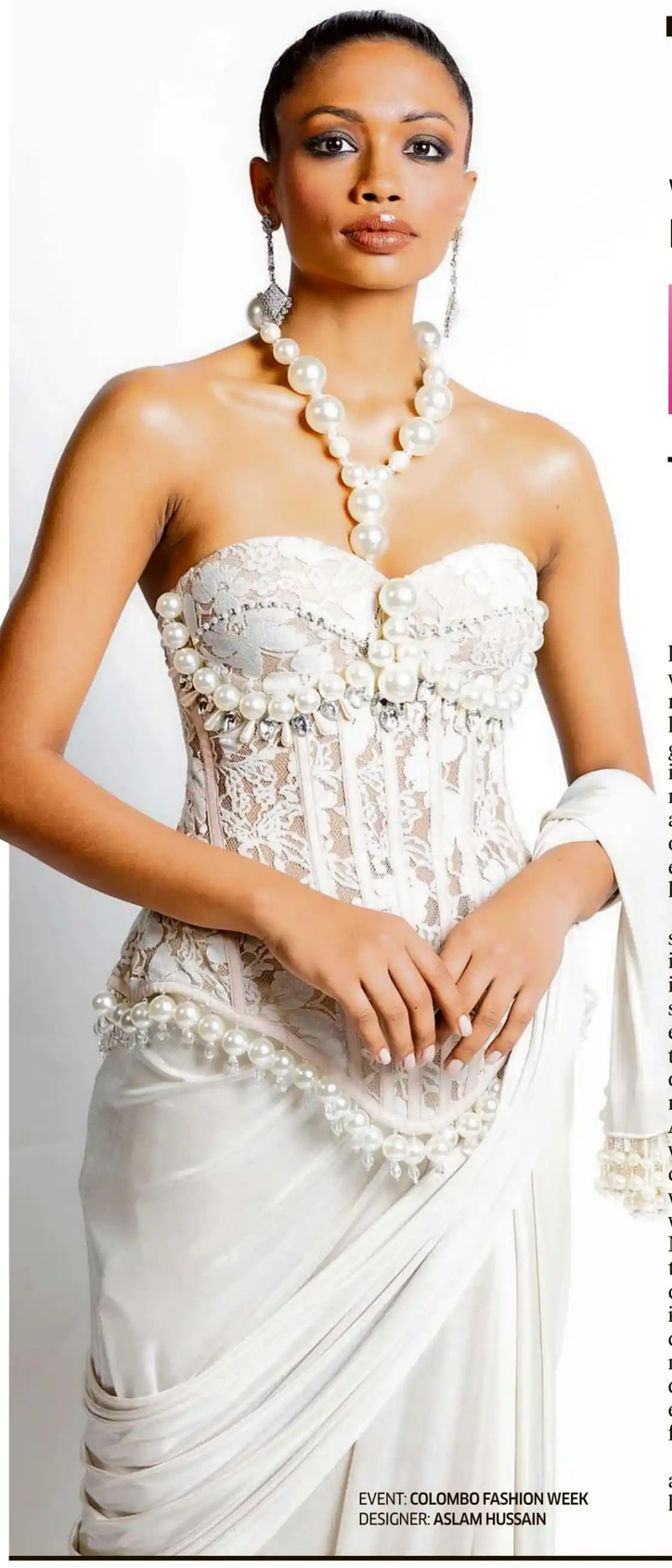
This is a muted shade that does not overwhelm in any decor scheme. Yellow is a pleasant hue that reflects warmth and sunshine. It gives you a sense of joy and energy. You can incorporate this shade in sheer curtains and also table runners. It contrasts well with many dark colours. You can get a dose of yellow in fresh flowers too.

SKY BLUE

It's a much-needed break from the grey of winter. Blue reminds you of the clear blue skies over picturesque outdoors. Blue also reminds you of a calming expanse of water. It is a peaceful and light colour to have around you. Furnishings and art in blue enhance the interiors of living spaces, especially in spring and summer.

Floral lavender

This is a light shade of purple that reminds you of early spring. It's visible in flowers blossoming all over the city as spring sets in. Lavender is a soothing and pleasant shade that creates a sense of elation. You can incorporate this colour in objects of decor and soft furnishings.



EVENT: **COLOMBO FASHION WEEK**
DESIGNER: **ASLAM HUSSAIN**

White magic!

While white may be a Pantone Colour of the Year for 2026, it has always been a colour of the year in India, writes **Prasad Bidapa**

Fashion Notes

White has officially been declared one of the 'Colours of the Year', but honestly, in India, white has never waited for trend forecasts to validate its relevance. It has been quietly ruling wardrobes, rituals and runways long before fashion panels decided to give it a certificate of 'cool'. White in India is both sacred and sombre, celebratory and restrained. It blesses beginnings and marks endings. Few colours in the world carry such emotional range while still looking impeccably stylish.

Traditionally, white signifies purity, simplicity and spiritual clarity. Saints, sages and scholars have trusted it for Centuries to communicate detachment from material excess. At the same time, white is also the colour of mourning, worn to honour loss with dignity and silence. No dramatic blacks, no theatrical darkness - just a calm acceptance wrapped in cotton. Only India could make grief look so minimal, composed and quietly graceful. It is emotional maturity in fabric form.

Yet, leave philosophy aside for a moment and let us address the real reason white survives every fashion cycle - it is a blessing in a tropical country. When the sun is at its most unforgiving, white is not a trend, it is survival strategy. It reflects heat, feels lighter, breathes better and allows your skin to forgive you for stepping out at noon. Black may be slimming, but white is merciful. In Indian summers, mercy is far more fashionable.

White is also the ultimate style equaliser. It flatters every skin tone, every age and every silhouette. It can be austere or indulgent, minimal or bridal, corporate or bohemian. A crisp white shirt can make you look like a CEO, poet or someone who owns a good skincare routine. It does not shout for attention, yet it never goes unnoticed.

Interestingly, while India uses white to mark mourning, Western cultures reserve it for weddings. Brides walk in white to symbolise purity, innocence and new beginnings. In a way, both cultures are saying the same thing with different emotional accents. White is about transition. Whether it is the beginning of a marriage or farewell to a life, white stands for passage, change and quiet strength.

And fashion-wise, white is forever stylish. It does not flirt with trends - it supervises them. It refuses to be seasonal, political or complicated. It is eternally classic, effortlessly elegant and surprisingly forgiving when accessorised well. White does not age, it matures. It does not fade, it evolves.

So yes, white may be a 'Colour of the Year', but in India, it is the colour of every year. It carries culture, climate wisdom, emotional depth and timeless style - all while keeping you cooler, calmer and unquestionably stylish. That alone makes it the smartest fashion decision you will ever wear.

EVENT: **ASHTALAKSHMI MAHOTSAV**
PHOTOGRAPHER: **JITEN AGARWAL**
DESIGNER: **KARMA SONAM BHUTIA**

EVENT: **ASHTALAKSHMI MAHOTSAV**
PHOTOGRAPHER: **JITEN AGARWAL**
DESIGNER: **RAJESH PRATAP SINGH**

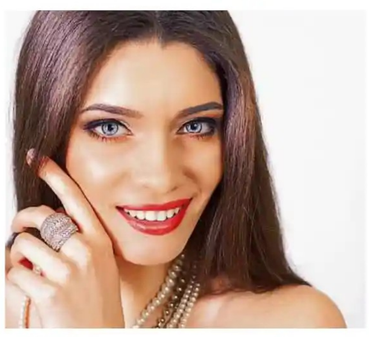
Touch of glitter...

Shilpi Madan has some ideas to help you get your style quotient high this year

Style File

Set the sparkle-meter racing with choicest picks in gold and silver this season. Whether diamonds or precious gems catch your fancy, be sure to shine out with nouveau jewellery underlining your personal sense of style.

Here's your guide to the sparkle caddy this season:

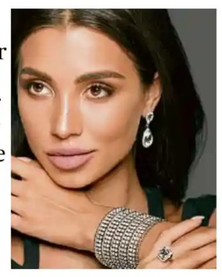


Split rings

The shiny gold on your finger sets the pulse racing. Go for the matte, burnished look with the elegant glide and look classy in a single sweep with split rings on your finger. Simply cool and minimalistic, this pick sets the pulse racing easy.

Stackable bracelets

Ladder up along your wrists for a spot of super cool. Play around with mixed metals, line up the multiples in thick bangles or pair up chunky wrist-pieces for a casual-dressy look. Make sure the sleeves end before the line-up begins on your hand.

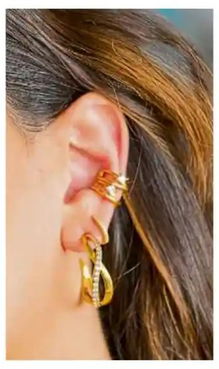


Cuff up

Finger cuffs are the way to go, with Bollywood stars flaunting winking diamonds and mini pearls in this delicate accessory. Choose cuffs that hug two fingers or clasp your palm in a snug embrace for an elegant pairing with your ensembles.

Ear here

Ear cuffs look cool and are a fabulous conversation starter. Choose vintage drama or subtle sparkles, polki and pearls or rubies lining the curve of your ears with the edgy ear accessory. It pairs up well with both the traditional and modern look.



Nath and maang tika

Have you ever thought of pairing a nose ring with a stunning chain with a leather bomber jacket? Play around with the boho look. A kundan maang tika revs up a plain outfit easily, as does a brilliant nose pin.

Connect with the dots

The versatile polka dot has made a comeback. **Ikyatha Yerasala** looks at the trend

Dotted Line

The famous peppy number 'Itsy Bitsy Teeny Weeny Yellow Polka Dot Bikini' may have come out more than six decades ago, but the playful, yet classic, polka dot design has managed to remain timeless. Recently, a popular social media App highlighted polka dots as one of the top trends to watch out for - and it's evident that the spots are in vogue again. From runways to home decor, the iconic polka print has resurfaced with fresh energy.

What's so special about polka dots that the fashion conscious go gaga over it?

Harshita Thakkar, a fashion design intern, shares, "Polka dots have been a fashion favourite for decades with iconic figures such as Marilyn Monroe, Audrey Hepburn and Princess Diana sporting them. Polka dots can be dressed up or down, making them suitable for various occasions. The print's adaptability allows it to blend with different styles - from vintage to modern".

"Polka dots can completely change the vibe of an outfit", believes Shipra Vinay, founder of a women's Western wear brand. "Polka dots, originally surfaced in women's wear in the mid-1800s, is one of the few prints that can play both fun and formal sides of fashion. Their scale and placement can completely change the vibe of the outfit - tiny dots feel subtle and feminine, while oversized dots are bold and contemporary", she adds.

Shipra reveals that 'polkamania' was a rage in Bollywood in the era of Rekha and Dimple Kapadia. "Now Bollywood is witnessing a resurgence again in polka dots with Tamannah's outfit on the red carpet proving that it's one of the global timeless trends".

Polka dots made their presence felt strongly during the autumn/winter 2025 runway season as well. "They're nostalgic, but every time they come back, designers reinterpret them in a new way. It can be worn as a saree or a subtle tie", opines model Lavanya S.

What are the fresh ways to wear polka dots?

You can layer polka dot pieces, such as a scarf or blazer lining, under solid tops for added playfulness. You can also combine polka dots with stripes, florals or checks for a trendy look, keeping one pattern dominant.

"You can pair polka dots with fit-and-flare dresses, high-waisted trousers or midi skirts for a classic look", says Harshitha, adding that polka dot accessories can also be used to elevate a look. "Use a polka dot belt to add a playful touch to dresses or tops", she adds. "A polka dot scarf tied around the neck or something as subtle as polka dot nail art can instantly elevate your look and be a conversation starter", opines Shipra.

Beyond fashion, polka dots are also popping up in lifestyle spaces with interiors sporting dotted upholstery, ceramics and wallpapers making a comeback. Even beauty trends have embraced the look. In fashion's ever-changing dance, polka dots keep twirling back into the spotlight.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Wknd. VARIETY

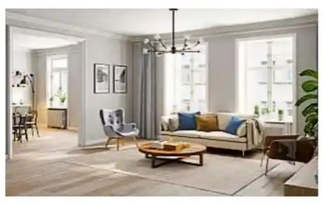
Plan a change in your daily diet. Go for lighter meals with more seasonal vegetables

EAT RIGHT

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

SPRING IN YOUR STEP

The spring is just around the corner. The chill of the harsh winter will soon be a thing of the past. The next couple of months are the most pleasant ones of the year. A few changes to your living spaces at home can make a huge difference in the way you experience spring.



BREATH OF FRESH AIR

The pleasant weather allows you to spend time in your garden daily in the early hours. The biting cold no longer there, get outdoors and get some fresh air. The pleasant morning sun and fresh air are ideal for a walk. The spring is a good time to get going if you have been putting off your morning walks.

Spring **Blooms**

Lighten up

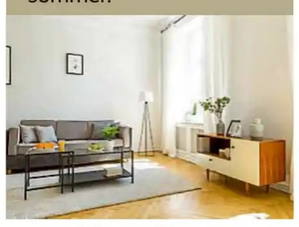
This is the time for bright, open interiors. Free up spaces in your living areas for wider expanses. Bright with natural light and airy living areas create a cheerful mood. Spring, with its pleasant weather, is a great time for bringing in the elements of Nature.

CLEAR CLUTTER

Too many artifacts spoil the 'spring look'. A painting that reflects the season – a scenic view of the countryside, for example - adds a pleasing touch to your living spaces. Fresh flowers and a focal point in bright hues are called for this season. Get your interiors to reflect the joy of Spring.

FABRICS AND DRAPES

It's time to put away the heavy winter fabrics. Use sheer curtains that allow sunlight in. Choose your curtains and furnishings in light colours. Decor with excessive throw cushions can make way for light furnishings with exquisite needlework. Pastel shades are ideal for both spring and summer.



Aroma therapy

The scents for the spring season are different from what you have been using in the winter. Let the citrusy, lavender and eucalyptus aromas waft through the living spaces. These scents go well with the pleasant weather and sunlit interiors. Don't let the aromas overwhelm.

GO HERBAL

The spring is a great time for a herbal corner in your garden. If you live in an apartment, turn a corner in a balcony into an indoor garden. You can grow parsley, coriander and dill. These herbs have many health benefits apart from garnishing your food. They also create a green space indoors.

Gourmet on the plate in 2026

Shilpi Madan presents seven views from the culinary world on food trends in 2026

Food Street

Wondering where the trends on the food front are headed this year? Move aside protein, fancy fragrant truffle oils masquerading as nutrient-bowlers and big plates.

Here is the culinary forecast for 2026:

Super micro regional restaurants will emerge thick and fast. India has such great cuisines - every 100 km the food changes, with incredible calorie sophistication. Coffee raves and matcha raves will pick up. Also, raw food will become more popular, leading to the rise of Peruvian restaurants.
ZORAWAR KALRA, Restaurateur

More restaurants will be set up by younger people in India - not professionally-trained chefs but people inspired by elders in their families or by travels. Inclusion of south-east Asian ingredients in Indian food will rise - such as oyster sauce, chilli crisps and rice vinegar. Also, non-vegetarian food of south India will gain popularity across India.
CAMELLIA PANJABI, Cookbook author

Return to regional and seasonal roots - authenticity will outshine artifice in 2026. Fermentation and gut health will rank high on the table preparations. Plant-forward dining will rise in popularity.
SUVIR SARAN, Chef

Fine dining will move away from shock value and intensity towards restraint and ingredient honesty. With a growing preference for menus that evolve with seasons, where the ingredient leads the dish rather than rigid concepts driving creativity.
JOSE MANUEL BORRALLO SANCHEZ, Chef

Local and regional food will take centre-stage this year. Health-conscious foods will gain momentum, and sustainable and organic eating will become more popular. Plant-based intake and nutritive eating with nostalgic flavours will become a favourite.
AJAY CHOPRA, Chef

Hyper-local ingredients and regional Indian food will become more popular. 'Better for you' comfort food will gain momentum. The concept of using food as a science to heal – functional nutrition will become more popular.
GUNTAS SETHI, Chef

Modern techniques and global finesse will combine with hyper-local and seasonal produce. Local ingredients will drive menus. From AI-generated menus to interactive dining and zero-waste kitchens, technology will play a bigger role in both back-of-house operations and guest experience.
RAKHEE VASWANI, Chef

Shrug off the January slump

Shilpi Madan has some simple tips to help you beat the New Year blues

Joyful Jan

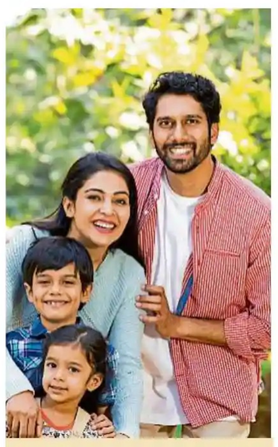
Feeling drained and disoriented as January rolls on? Take heart. Here are ways to get past the New Year slump after days of easy work routines, holidays and binges. Make Jan joyful and push aside the lethargy.

Get in the sun
It's winter and you need to feel warm and content. Let the natural light flow into your home, make the effort to get out in the sun and let the warmth flow into your bones. Lack of sunshine impedes the flow of serotonin – the happy hormone – making you feel low and lethargic.

Eat warm
Make sure you bring in the warm breakfast, and take in hot soups, broths and sauces as part of your daily intake. Leave cold dishes for the summer months as you cook the nutrients into your diet.

Go slow
Be a little kind to yourself. Activating your New Year resolutions with full gusto, making mean work calendars can get a bit draining on your mind and body. Ease yourself gradually into new routines, setting short-term goals that are motivators.

Sleep well
Set your sleep routine, getting in relevant supplements if required, and adhering to a fixed time to turn into bed every day. A well-rested mind and body work wonders. Bring your circadian rhythm back as you settle into a routine. This helps in maintaining your overall sense of well-being.



Beat the blues

- Celebrate rainbow colours on your plate
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables daily
- Maintain a check on vitamin deficiencies
- Spend time with family and friends more often
- Take it slow and steady

Call of the WILD

This is a great time for some adventure. **Deepa Natarajan Lobo** presents some options

It's an ideal time to step outdoors for some fun. The weather is kinder, the air clearer and adventure destinations across India most welcoming.

Here are some popular adventure spots in Karnataka and across the country.

Trekking
December to February is a great time to plan treks. With cool weather and scenic views, the climb uphill becomes a pleasant affair. In Karnataka, Kodachadri, Mullayanagiri near Chikkamagaluru, and trails around Kodagu are popular. Kotagiri, Avalanche and Mukurthi nestled in the famed Nilgiris of Tamil Nadu too offer cool weather and misty landscapes.

According to Raksha Nagaraj, a solo traveller, Karnataka is a great trekking region with varied trails. "Treks like Kudremukha and Gangadikal offer dense forest walks and picturesque grasslands. These are best done between October and February," she says.

Further north, Uttarakhand's Nag Tibba and Kedarkantha, and Himachal Pradesh's Triund near McLeod Ganj, attract beginners looking for snow-dusted trails and clear skies.

River rafting
While Rishikesh continues to be a favourite for its expansive view of snow-capped peaks and rafting on the Ganges, with multiple stretches catering to different comfort levels, Kullu in Himachal Pradesh also offers rafting experiences surrounded by mountain scenery during this season.

"In south, Dandeli is one of the best spots for white water rafting. The Kali River offers strong rapids, especially during the post-monsoon and winter months and is ideal for both beginners and experienced rafters," says Raksha.

Scuba diving, snorkelling
"For anyone looking to explore India's waters, the west and south coasts are ideal," says Akshay A S, a scuba instructor. "Places like Varkala offer calm cliff-side beaches and a relaxed tropical vibe, while Murudeshwar is special because you have the temple town on one side and excellent diving around Netrani Island on the other."

Udupi's beaches are quieter and perfect for discovering coastal Karnataka, and south Goa has good diving conditions as well. On the east coast, Rameshwaram and Puducherry are emerging dive spots, especially for beginners. "For clearer waters and richer marine life, the Andamans, particularly Neil Island and Chidiya Tapu, and Lakshadweep remain among the best diving destinations in the country during this season," Akshay adds.

Surfing, coastal treks
The blue waters of Mulki near Mangaluru are very popular for surfing, particularly during these months when wave conditions are favourable for beginners. Paddleboarding and kayaking are also popular along calmer coastal stretches.

In Kerala, beach towns Varkala and Kovalam attract travellers interested in learning surfing or enjoying sea kayaking in pleasant weather.

The Konkan coast across Karnataka and Maharashtra hide several gems which can be discovered through scenic walks and coastal treks. Places like Gokarna, Ratnagiri and Tarkarli combine beach walks with water activities, making them suitable for slow-paced adventure holidays.

Wildlife safari, desert adventure
January and February are good for wildlife experiences due to cooler temperatures and better visibility. Karnataka's Bandipur, Nagarhole and Kabini are popular for jeep safaris and Nature walks. In Kerala, Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary offers guided forest walks and boat safaris, while Tamil Nadu's Mudumalai Tiger Reserve attracts wildlife enthusiasts during these months.

For a contrasting landscape of desert and dunes, head over to Jaisalmer in Rajasthan and experience the Sam sand dunes. The region is ideal now for camel safaris, desert camping and quad biking, with cool evenings and clear skies adding to the magical experience.